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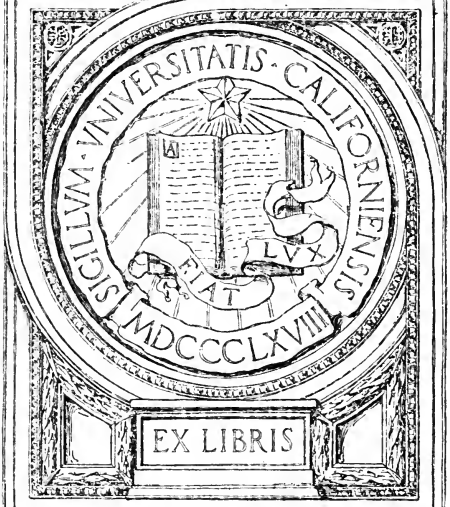
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PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION AND BRITISH POLITICS

By J. FISCHER WILLIAMS

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PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION AND BRITISH POLITICS

INTRODUCTION

WE are fortunate in this country in possessing, in spite of all the bitterness of political contests, a general agreement, at least in form, as to the basis of government. We have passed beyond the stage where Germany, for example, still is—the stage in which the most powerful section of the community holds a different view as to the fundamentals of politics from that of large masses of the people. With us the consent of the governed is accepted as the one possible foundation on which a government can be based. And the criticisms which men of different parties pass on the present state of affairs all take this as their starting point. A Unionist complains that no government in Ireland can be legitimate which is unacceptable to a large and homogeneous Protestant section of the population. A Home Ruler retorts that no government is tolerable to which the majority of the Irish population does not consent. A short time ago the Liberals founded their attack upon the House of Lords on this, that the people had by their representatives consented to legislation and the Lords rejected it. But the Lords themselves in so doing professed only to be seeking the people's consent. What form this consent of the governed should take and how it should be expressed, whether it should be merely a general consent given from time to time at general elections, or whether an express consent to each

"Consent of Governed" the basis of Government.

legislative measure is necessary, are questions hotly contested. But that popular consent is necessary all agree.

Machinery for expressing Consent.

Now in these conditions it is a remarkable thing that so little heed is given to the all-important machinery by which this consent is ascertained and signified. If some matter of property is at stake it is curious to see how careful is our law that the consent of all necessary parties is obtained, and obtained freely: under the old law the married woman was examined separately from her husband to ascertain that she consented fully to a dealing with her land—but neither under the old law nor the new are any effective precautions taken that the sense of the people goes with its government in any but the most general way. And this is the main cause of our present perplexities. We are uncertain how far the mind of the people is expressed in its government, and when we seek to discover what the mind of the people is, we are baffled because we have at our disposal no proper method of discovery; we seem to find ourselves confronted by a large, some people say a growing, indifference to politics and a disinclination for public affairs. If a man can contribute something, however little, to stem this indifference, to stir popular interest, to bring good minds into politics, and to make our legislation really in harmony with our active public opinion, he will not have deserved ill of the State.

Criticisms of present Position.

At the present time our constitutional arrangements are in process of change, if not of reorganisation, but it would be difficult to say that there has, as yet, been debate worthy of the occasion. Party recriminations we have had in plenty, but little can be gathered from them except that the present position is unstable and unsatisfactory to all sides.

By Unionists.

Unionists complain sometimes that the House of Commons is too powerful, and sometimes that the Cabinet is omnipotent. They find recent legislation hasty and ill-considered. They deplore the growth of bureaucracy. They conceive that the alliance of the Governmental parties is insincere, and that the measures proposed by the Government are not the honest expression

of the will even of the majority in the Commons. They regret that there is no power to refer legislative measures to the popular vote and no security that the will of the electorate is in harmony with the law. They complain that the House of Lords has been deprived by the Parliament Act of the power of compelling a consultation of the people; and though no man would propose a mere restoration of the former state of things, the reconstitution of a powerful Second Chamber is thought to be one of the tasks that await a Unionist administration. Further, in private, at any rate, and occasionally in public, Unionists deplore the fact, as they conceive it, that education and tried experience in public affairs have not the weight that they deserve in a well-ordered polity.

If Unionists are dissatisfied their opponents are in little better humour. They agree that legislation is hasty; they add that the pressure on the time of parliament is so great that this hurry is inevitable, and that the only remedy is to be found in Home Rule for Ireland, to be followed in due course by a general federal or devolutionary scheme. The Parliament Act cannot be a permanent feature in the constitution. It has left the House of Lords a partially disabled warship; but the crew has not been drafted elsewhere; and a single-clause bill in a Unionist parliament might restore the unfettered activities of a Conservative Second Chamber. The House of Lords is unchanged in its attitude and its constitution, and, though it can no longer permanently reject bills carried early in a parliament by a majority that has three years' cohesion, it can and probably will make the early half of a Liberal parliament full of vain repetitions of enactments, and the latter half taken up rather with sketches of possible bills than with vigorous Radical legislation. Further, the ordinary unofficial member of parliament feels heavily his impotence; the days of private legislation are practically over; the permanent civil service grows stronger both in administration and legislation; in the constituencies the machinery of party is all-powerful, while in the House of Commons the majority of the party itself is practically impotent to enforce its will upon its leaders.

By Liberals.

The Labour party are in a different position. They have no immediate responsibility and no immediate prospect of direct responsibility. They are inclined to brush aside constitutional questions as of little importance compared to social problems, and yet they have their own questions of "machinery." They are a new and propagandist body. New and propagandist bodies ought to grow. In the House of Commons the Labour party grows hardly at all. It even diminishes. Its main hope in present conditions is to put pressure on governments and force them to legislate. But existing conditions make the exercise of this pressure by no means easy. It is not possible to attack successfully a reactionary or indolent minister without coming into collision with the Cabinet as a whole. It is usually a worse evil, from the point of view of Labour, to destroy a Liberal government, however half-hearted, with the certain result of a general election and the possible consequence of the return of a less sympathetic government to power, than to support it. Further, there are not many issues, if any, on which the Labour party by itself has the power to eject the government. It needs either Radical or Unionist support if it is to effect so much. The Labour men are a small minority in an assembly of capitalists, although they claim to be alone the direct and natural representatives of by far the most numerous section of the electorate. If John Stuart Mill was to return to life, perhaps nothing would surprise him more than the small size of the Labour party. Mill's work on *Representative Government* is deeply coloured with the idea that on a popular franchise the direct representatives of the many will far outnumber the spokesmen of the few: but in fact the "Labour men" in the House of Commons are less than one-fifteenth of the whole body, and the tendency at the moment is for direct Labour representation to shrink rather than to grow. The working classes as a whole seem, if not indifferent, at least no more interested in politics than other classes, and a part at least of the interest that they do show is directed rather to the possibilities of "direct action" and the more extreme theories now known as Syndicalism than to the slower methods of

The Labour Party.

parliamentary procedure. To bring the whole working class into parliamentary politics is the first task of the Labour party. It is not yet discharged.

These criticisms are illustrative of a widespread discontent and disillusion. Reformers used often to assume that a system of government of which the main feature is an assembly elected by a direct popular vote must inevitably devote itself effectively to the removal of the grievances and the better organisation of the life of the majority of those who elect it. Unfortunately, this assumption, like so many other short and easy inferences in human affairs, was erroneous. It made no allowance for all the limiting conditions of human activity, for the apathy and the indolence of human nature, and for the power of a press not wholly devoted to the supply of unbiassed information; it did not attach sufficient importance to all the necessary contrivances for the creation and management of the representative assembly in the environment of a traditional society; it allowed nothing for the friction of the not very skilful machinery by which public opinion is organised, expressed, and enforced.

Disillusion.

It has been said that John Stuart Mill attached too much importance to the question of electoral machinery; and advocates of a change in methods of election are frequently reproached with making the mistake that a mere alteration of "machinery" can change the fundamental characteristics of a modern polity. But, putting aside the fact that, if only those reforms are to be accepted for which no exaggerated claim is ever made, we should never have any reform of any description, it may fairly be answered that the reproach is shallow, in so far as it implies that the machinery of representation is unimportant. Modern democratic government is inevitably representative. The representative assembly may be controlled as in Switzerland by the devices of the Referendum and the Initiative, but apart from those devices the representative assembly is, at any rate in current popular theory, the governing body, and is, moreover, the one channel by which the ordinary citizen exercises a direct influence on public affairs. It is the modern substitute for

Importance of Machinery of Representation.

the assembly of citizens that ruled the early democratic state. We can no longer assemble all citizens in person: they are present by proxy. The method of the choice of these proxies is of vital importance; the experience both of history and of contemporary life is there to prove it: not to multiply illustrations, the ancient democratic city-states broke down and passed into autocracies largely because the ancient world never evolved the "machinery" of representative government; the different forms of comitia affected profoundly the politics of ancient Rome; the electoral methods of the United States and of the first French Republic have been of crucial importance in American and European history.

Reactions on individual Character.

Further, on the effective participation of the citizen in government not merely depends the realisation of the popular will (when public opinion is really formed and decided as to some issue of politics) —but the utilisation for the public advantage of all such resources of knowledge and intelligence as exist in the community. In considering electoral "machinery" we have to take into account not only the character of the assembly elected and its efficiency as a governing machine, but also the effect of the machinery upon the elector himself: the extent to which it nerves and stimulates his mind, his imagination, and his character; the extent to which it interests him in government and makes him a conscious contributor to an organic whole. Representative machinery is not merely a method of getting things done more or less efficiently. It reacts on individual character. It may depress the individual by treating him as an insignificant unit in a drilled army whose business is to vote at the word of command in a fever of temporary excitement following a long period of torpor. It may elevate and stimulate his interests by giving him a real choice as to the person who is to represent him, by securing to him, as far as may be, the privilege of having his own representative. And as the machinery produces one or other of these effects, so must it be judged as an efficient instrument of popular government. For the ultimate justification of popular government is not so much its efficiency for doing certain

definite tasks—education, national defence, the care of streets and roads: these things may be and perhaps are done as well by an autocracy or bureaucracy. The ultimate value of popular government is that no other system offers the same possibilities of individual development. A governed man is *pro tanto* a poorer thing than a governing man. To take the people into partnership is not merely to increase the trading profits: it is to turn "hands" into men.

Our present System of Government and "Consent."

It is worth while to look for a moment at the actual machinery of our government with a view to seeing how in actual practice the "consent of the governed" on which all men agree to base our government is manifested. Our laws proclaim themselves to be enacted by the "King's Most Excellent Majesty by and with the advice and consent of" (amongst others) "the Commons." The Commons consent to every law: do therefore the electors of the Commons consent also? In some political arguments—for instance, in much of the discussion on both sides of the women's suffrage question—it seems to be assumed that the electorate is called on as a sovereign to decide finally all political questions, including such executive matters as peace and war. But this idea is plainly erroneous. The electorate as such is called upon at intervals, usually of about five years, to decide the constitution of the House of Commons, and incidentally, which of the two larger political parties is to furnish the administration. Normally an elector has nothing more to do. He comes out of his cave at these long intervals, like some powerful animal: he faces with dazzled eyes the turmoil, the glitter, and the shouting of a general election. Somehow or other he gives a vote, which can only be the expression of his choice as between two (or at most three) parliamentary candidates; the choice is made, and for the next five years political journalists discuss to their own satisfaction the insoluble problem of what that choice meant. Was it merely a negative vote of want of confidence in the party of the candidate not chosen? or was it a positive mandate for whatever legislation the party of the successful candidate may be in a position to carry or

propose? At any rate, the elector until next consulted—though perhaps in other civic capacities he is not impotent—has no direct sovereign power to make his will respected. Indeed, it is perhaps an open question how far in constitutional practice he is deemed to have the right in the intervals between general elections to have his will respected. Legislation at its first introduction may be unpopular. Is the government therefore bound to withdraw it? Or, may the government say to the electors that they must not pass a hasty judgment, that they will be consulted on some future date, though, unfortunately, it may be true that the consultation will be about something else as well as the legislation in dispute? At any rate, this is what most modern British governments do say to the electors. But this is not the language of a subject to a sovereign whose consent is necessary if legislation is to be valid.

In writing thus I do not wish to imply that the power of the electorate is illusory. It is in fact very real. The possession of the vote forces the government to give some heed to its possessor. It secures him against the worst forms of preventable oppression. It enables him, no doubt after long delay, to dismiss a government which he has learnt to dislike. But the elector's power is on the whole negative rather than possitive: he can stop certain things and he can destroy administrations, but he is not the arbiter and controller of the daily or even yearly work of government and legislation; and it may be added that there is no prospect that in any measurable time the British elector will become so.

Powers of House of Commons.

Is then the House of Commons once elected all-powerful? Plainly, no. The power of the House of Commons, like the power of the electorate, is mainly a negative power, though it has far more frequent opportunities for its exercise. The members of the House of Commons have the power of withdrawing their confidence from His Majesty's ministers, and they have the power of rejecting their legislation. But their positive power, their power of initiative in legislation, has almost vanished. A private member's bill has small chance of success unless the government adopt it, and whether they

so adopt it or not is a matter on which their will is unfettered. The House of Commons never, on an unofficial motion, instructs a government to adopt a bill, much less to introduce one. Even in the exercise of its negative power the House is hampered by the fact that the greater does not include the less: it can destroy a government but it cannot merely dismiss an under-secretary; it can reject a bill on second reading, but, if the government stand firm, the House cannot change an "and" for an "or" in governmental legislation and yet retain itself in existence and the government in power. If it throws out a government a dissolution almost certainly follows, because the succeeding government can hardly ever command a majority in the same House. The practice of parliament is in this respect rather like the old criminal law which knew only felony, and had the death penalty and that alone. A government must, if it is not disposed to give way, be sentenced to death, and the judge, like the French king in the great novelist's tale, must prepare to follow his victim. A government cannot be fined forty shillings. But it is certainly inconvenient to have no middle course. A choice of only two alternatives is often no real choice.

Nor is the House of Commons a body aloof, superior, inhuman, composed of disinterested and impartial critics of affairs. Its members are elected as members of one of the great parties; they have, for the most part, the outlook of party men. They are not disposed to judge their leaders harshly. Their minds are, in many cases, the minds of a disciplined crowd. But they are not, as a rule, as is so often wrongly said, the slaves of some external mysterious force called "the caucus"; their subjection is born in themselves. They are men among men; they believe what they wish to believe. They are not sharply cut off from their own public opinion and that of their sympathisers on the one side, nor from the opinions of their leaders on the other. But their party spirit and the spirit of their party is strong; an individual member cannot take a line independent of his party leaders except at the price of his political life. For the majority of the House, the Cabinet is in part their own creation, and they look on it both with affection and with awe.

The Cabinet.

To some critics of our present system it has appeared that the powers of continuous sovereignty which neither the electorate nor the House of Commons possess are to be found with the Cabinet. In a great measure this is true. The Cabinet determines what legislation shall be proposed, no doubt in this respect taking its instructions to a large extent from outside, and it settles on what lines the general business and executive policy of the country, in foreign, naval, military, and home affairs, shall be carried on. And there is no doubt that of late years the powers of the Cabinet have grown at the expense of the House of Commons, though this must, to a certain extent, be qualified by the fact that the Cabinet is largely in the House and of it; if it comes to a collision of wills the Cabinet can usually get its way, yet the wisest Cabinet is that which has its finger well on the pulse of the House and does not allow a conflict of wills to arise.

But Cabinets are far from omnipotent. We seem to see them in the fulness of their power, but the germs of decay are already at work. The appearances do not correspond exactly with the facts. English constitutional development proceeds secretly and almost unconsciously. Just as, to take one instance, behind the titular sovereign the Secretary of State developed, so behind the Cabinet, even in the apparent fulness of its powers, other influences and forces are already forming. The plenary sittings of the Cabinet are not very frequent. Momentous decisions must sometimes be taken by a minister alone or after consultation with one or two colleagues only. There are "inner Cabinets." For the continuous work of administration, for much that moulds the lives and affects the sympathies of the people at large, for Poor Law Orders, for the reprieve or execution of a murderer, for the remission of a sentence under a blasphemy law, it is the individual minister who in the first instance takes the decision. And he in his turn is largely—how largely depends on his character taken with that of those around him—in the hands of his permanent officials. But when he once has taken action, he is almost certainly supported by the full weight of the Cabinet, partly from personal loyalty and friendship and a natural

unwillingness to admit that a colleague has blundered. And so the Cabinet limits its own power at the same time as it curbs the power of the House of Commons. As in legislation, so in administration there is no effective popular force to reverse an unpopular or wrong decision. The "consent of the governed" is presumed, it is not and cannot be asked.

Not Autocratic.

The Cabinet, again, just as little as the House of Commons, is not an autocratic body with a clean slate before it on which it can write what it will.[1] It consists of a body of men responsive naturally to their environment and under pledge to their supporters to carry out certain lines of policy, though it may often be doubtful how far their pledges may go and how far an elector who votes for a government candidate endorses his programme and does not merely protest against the programme or the policy of the other side. A Cabinet has to look forward to the next general election; it has to strive to stand well with public opinion; it is in touch with the party organisation, and, indeed, its legislative programme is often inspired rather by the resolutions of the party organisation than directly by members of parliament. Nor are these necessary and internal limitations the only things that check the power of the Cabinet. Of late years its control over matters of defence and of foreign policy—or, more generally, over all such matters as concern the British Dominions as well as the British Isles—has diminished. The Committee of Defence is likely to grow at the expense of the Cabinet; the so-called removal of foreign affairs from party politics is really their removal from the Cabinet as well as from the electorate and the House of Commons. These changes are not surprising; that the British Government should control autocratically matters which affect great communities of which it is not representative would be an anomaly. But the changes do not tend to associate the people of this country more closely with the government.

[1] Perhaps the only true "autocrats" are the wielders of absolute power who differ in temperament and outlook from their subjects. Peter the Great was an autocrat, not so the later Czars.

But it may be said that in all this discussion there is a certain unreality. We are making ourselves the slaves of words if we write and speak as if the House of Commons, Cabinet, and "Caucus" were all sharply defined and independent entities, whereas, in fact, they all overlap and run one into the other. A politician may well be at once member of parliament, Cabinet minister, high in the councils of the "Caucus" (though he will not be nominally one of its members), and in direct touch with the electorate. Each and all these bodies act, react, and interact with, against, and upon each other, and perhaps the one broadly valid distinction that can be made is between "government," in all its forms and ramifications of Cabinet, inner Cabinet, House of Lords, permanent officials, caucus, and House of Commons, on the one hand, and the "governed," plain ordinary men and women, on the other. But the House of Commons is that part of the "government" with which "the governed" are directly in touch, and through which their consent to legislation and administration must in the main be signified.

The broad Distinction is between Government and Governed.

"Government" with us is not unitary. No one individual or body of men is "Sovereign" or the sole depositary of power. Electorate, House of Commons, House of Lords (when not in harmony with the Commons), Cabinet, inner Cabinet, Secretaries of State, Permanent Officials, Party Organisations, all share in political power, but none of them monopolise it. To seek to define exactly the share of each is idle. Things are in a flux. They change as we speak. A powerful personality here or there will incline the balance one way or the other. But if exact definition is not possible, still certain broad statements are true. We can be sure of certain broad facts. We can see the main tendencies of things. And one broad fact is that the share of the electorate in political power is not so large as is often assumed to be the case; and one main tendency is that the powers of the House of Commons as such incline to dwindle. But the House of Commons and its election are just those parts of the Constitution by which the "governed" come into direct contact with the "government." To perfect and strengthen

these parts is to produce that better harmony between the people of this country and its government which is the expression of a civilised democracy.

We have seen that there is a general agreement that government must be with consent. Some would go further and say that it is not enough that citizens should consent; they should also co-operate. Their co-operation will not only improve government; it will also enable the community to realise its own capacities. In an active-minded community and in the active-minded part of a torpid community there is a constant play and interchange of ideas. Now, though formative ideas are not like meteorites—single detached phenomena descending unexpectedly from on high—but represent rather the necessary reaction of a certain mind in a given environment, yet they occur in the first instance to individuals, and for a long time are confined to minorities. All that is valuable in the intellectual and moral, as in the material, world has been and often still remains the property of a minority. Prophets, Stoics, Christians, Reformers, Abolitionists have all been minorities. If we must govern with the consent of the majority equally we should so frame our government that the light which comes from minorities may be kept alive for the common good; the common council of the nation should include in itself, of right and not of favour, whatever the community has within it of vigour, of interest, and of life. If the majority[1] is to have the power of consent on behalf of the whole, equally minorities, in the interest of the whole, should have free liberty of growth and

Co-operation as well as Consent.

[1] It is often assumed that in the last resort the will of the majority prevails over the minority because, in the event of a resort to force, the majority would presumably conquer on the field of battle. This seems unsatisfactory. The presumption that at any given moment the majority of voters could coerce a recalcitrant minority is very uncertain. And the theory deprives the supremacy of the majority of all moral title. It is more true to say that one reason for allowing the will of the majority to prevail is that in this way we have the largest number of individuals in agreement with the government, *i.e.*, so far contented politically that they are in the condition most favourable for their own development.

expression. The representative system, the machinery by which majority and minorities alike take part in government, should, as far as may be, assure to majority and minorities, and even to individuals, their due share of constitutional influence and power.

THE PRESENT REPRESENTATIVE SYSTEM

IT would be out of place here to consider the question of the basis of representation. We do not now enquire who ought to be electors. We confine ourselves to the narrower question—given an actual electoral body, with its existing legal rights, how ought its representatives in parliament to be chosen? And the first question that naturally arises is whether our present system of election is satisfactory. For if it is satisfactory we need go no further.

Arbitrary Divisions dating from 1885.

In the first place, let us observe that our present system is of no great antiquity. It resulted from an arrangement made between the leaders of the two great parties, and embodied in the Redistribution of Seats Act, 1885. That arrangement involved the abolition of the former three-member constituency (which admitted an imperfect form of minority representation) and the destruction, except in the cases of twenty-four parliamentary boroughs and of the Universities, of the two-membered constituency. With the exception of these favoured[1] places the whole country is divided arbitrarily into electoral divisions returning each one member of parliament to represent all the voters registered in the division: in the great majority of cases (the only exception

[1] I say "favoured" because in their case an opportunity offers which at the present time (1914) has been made use of in such cases as Leicester and Norwich to divide the representation between two parties. This indicates how separate parties, between whom there is at any rate some common ground, can take advantage of the large constituency to give the two wings of the compound majority each a fair share of representation. In former years there were also certain cases in which the two seats in one constituency were divided by agreement between Conservative and Liberal. York at the present time has, after contest, a representation divided between the two parties. It is strange that the Royal Commission on Electoral Systems should actually have recommended the abolition of the two-member constituency as a means of securing "a more fully representative character for popularly elective legislative bodies."

being the smallest counties and the smaller boroughs) these divisions are not local government units, they have no civic cohesion, but exist merely for the purpose of parliamentary elections.

For parliamentary purposes our great provincial cities have no separate existence. It might, perhaps, have been intelligible, though it would be erroneous, to personify, as it were, a city or a county or other local unit, and to say, "this one thing shall speak with one voice, and that the voice of the majority"; but it is wholly unintelligible to force voters into arbitrary divisions constituted *ad hoc*, and to make the right of the citizen to representation—not, be it observed, to supremacy but to representation—depend on the accident of his agreement with the majority of those resident in an arbitrary vicinity.

In each of these local divisions one member is returned. Where two candidates alone contest the seat, the member chosen represents the majority of those who vote, the minority go unrepresented. Where three candidates contest the seat, the member chosen is that candidate for whom more voters vote than for any one of the other two candidates. In this case two minorities which together often make a majority go unrepresented. But in both cases large numbers of citizens have no representative in parliament, for we need not take seriously the after-election platitudes by which a man elected to support a policy claims to represent those who dislike the policy and did their best not to have him for their member.

No Representation for Minorities or sometimes for Majorities.

To some persons this refusal to a citizen of representation in parliament, though it violates the very purpose of representative government, seems a trivial and a theoretical grievance. As often happens, long usage has hardened the mind and consecrated an obvious injustice. It is urged that if a man is not represented by his local member of parliament, still in other parts of the country members of parliament are returned whose views are more or less in accordance with his own. He must console himself for his personal disappointment by the success of his party

Violation of Right to Representation.

In Minority.

elsewhere. Now, possibly to an active partisan who thinks of himself as a mere soldier in the ranks of a party this thought may bring some consolation. But even he should reflect that the vitality and activity of a party in a district depends largely on whether it has some tolerable prospect of securing representation. In what are reckoned "hopeless" districts from a party point of view, parties have usually to depend on eleventh-hour candidates of little distinction; the stimulus to political thought and activity which is given by a local member of parliament or strong candidate is wholly wanting. The local organisation falls into decay; the stagnant pool is ruffled only at the long intervals of general elections, and not always then. But to anyone who is not content thus to sink his individuality the grievance goes very deep. The right which is apparently conceded in theory to a citizen of a free state to take part in the management of the affairs of the community has become, in fact, illusory. There is no one in the National Council of whom he can say, "I sent him there," and so long as any considerable body of citizens cannot say that they have, in the House of Commons, representatives whom they sent there, the House of Commons loses in moral authority by the exclusion.[1]

And Majority.

It might be thought that though those voters in the single-member constituency who do not vote for the elected candidates are unrepresented, still, those who do vote for the successful candidates have nothing to complain of. This, however, is far from being the case. One result of the single-member constituency is that

[1] Mr Asquith well expressed this thought in a speech at St Andrews, on 19th February 1906: "It was infinitely to the advantage of the House of Commons, if it was to be a real reflection and mirror of the national mind, that there should be no strain of opinion honestly entertained by any substantial body of the King's subjects which should not find there representation and speech."

Compare also Mr Asquith's words at Burnley, 5th December 1910: "It is an essential and integral feature of our policy that we shall go forward with the task of making the House of Commons not only the mouthpiece but the mirror of the national mind." Mr Ramsay Macdonald imagines that the business of a parliament is to be an organ of will rather than a mirror of mind. As if the human will and the human mind were severable!

each party almost invariably presents only one candidate, and very few voters, usually only the inmost ring of the party organisation, are consulted in the choice of the candidate. Thus the elector who, on the whole, prefers his own party to any other, but would like to see some modifications made in the party creed, has only the choice of voting for a man for whom he is at best lukewarm, or for a man whose policy he actively dislikes. In the end he probably votes for his party's candidate, and his vote thus contributes to the enactment of measures to some of which he is opposed. Thus his own view has no representative in parliament; he has no means of saying that he endorses nine-tenths, or three-fourths, or two-thirds of a programme. Why should he not have this liberty if it is possible that it should be given him? Surely in these matters there is a presumption in favour of freedom. Surely the onus of proof is on those who say that the curtailment of the elector's freedom is necessary, and it is for them to show cause against an electoral system, if such can be found, that would bring freedom to the elector and the representative. The result of the present system is plainly to increase, at the elector's expense, the powers of those who concern themselves more especially with the organisation of parties. It is in their power to force the elector to assent to policies of which he disapproves, on pain of greater evils which he seeks to prevent. Just as the House of Commons cannot accept nineteen Cabinet ministers and reject the twentieth, so the elector cannot exercise any effective control on the policy of his own party. He must take or leave the party programme as a whole.

These rather general remarks may readily be illustrated by examples from contemporary politics. It is common knowledge that the Tariff policy of the Unionist party has been a cause of much difficulty. But the Unionist elector, in present conditions, cannot and will not be asked to decide. The Unionist party cannot allow two candidates, one more and one less Protectionist, in the same division. To do this might mean the certain loss of the seat. What then is a Unionist who so far dissents from the official policy that he either believes in agricultural Protection or complete

Free Trade to do? He has the alternative of voting for the taxation of manufactured goods or supporting the policies advocated by Mr Lloyd George. To his own view he can give no effective expression; yet surely this is a matter on which he ought to be consulted, if possible. The dilemma of the Unionist voter may easily be paralleled on the other side. A man may be an ardent Home Ruler and yet not be satisfied with the land policy of the Liberal Government. But he cannot both support Home Rule and oppose the land policy. Is it to be wondered at if in these conditions some men whose co-operation in public affairs would be of high value abstain from politics? But the conditions are unnecessary.

The "Common Will" Theory.

A criticism on this argument may be conveniently considered here. It is objected that the elector has no right to have his opinion represented, but that what is aimed at by a representative system is an expression of the "common will." But the common will is a resultant of the opinions held in the community, and until these opinions are represented with some approach to accuracy, the will expressed by the vote of the representative assembly is not, or may not be, the true common will. The elector at an election is not doing an executive act: he is choosing some one to represent him in an assembly which has at once duties of discussion, legislative functions, and the task of appointing and controlling the executive. That assembly will decide what comes before it by a majority vote; the majority will prevail as representing and expressing the common will of the assembly. But to say that in the formation of the assembly minorities are not to be regarded is to insist that the "common will" is to declare itself without consideration of the opinion of the community. It is necessary to ignore minorities when a chief executive officer, President or Mayor or Speaker, has to be chosen, or again when one definite question has to be decided on referendum; but when an assembly representative of a nation has to be elected which has itself in turn to perform acts of will, to insist in the name of the "common will" that a minority must be excluded unless it happen to be a local majority, is to mistake the whole purpose of representative government.

Let us test this "common will" theory in practice. A "will" has relation to an act, it is in fact action considered subjectively. Suppose that we wish to ascertain by the vote of a representative assembly what is the "common will" as to Tariff Reform. Shall we get a better result if we allow the Unionist Free Traders and any Liberal Protectionists who may exist in the community to be represented by men of their own opinions, or if we force them to choose men who disagree with them either on that particular question or on the whole field of politics? If there is a "common will" for Free Trade or against Female Suffrage, to take two questions on which the two main parties are not wholly united, this common will cannot under existing conditions express itself in parliament.

Unfair Advantage of small Sections at Present.

The system, however, has for minorities certain illegitimate compensations. In an evenly balanced contest between two candidates a determined body of enthusiasts may exercise an influence altogether out of proportion to their size. They may exact from an eager candidate as the price of their support pledges which, even if dishonest in origin, as not proceeding from a real conviction, may yet be honoured in observance, if only for fear of loss of the vital support; and these small minorities may succeed in imposing on the community what the great body of voters may regard as cranks or fads. The present electoral system is usually supposed to be a protection against the cranks and faddists whom a truly representative or "proportional" system would introduce; it is in fact their strongest ally. For it gives them a factitious strength, and it prevents the true paucity of their numbers from appearing.

Unfairness to Public Men.

The system is also open to criticism from the point of view of the member of parliament as a worker. We hear much to-day, and rightly, of the desirability of continuity in employment. A man is the better craftsman if he is not haunted by the fear of unemployment. This doctrine has its application in the political sphere. It is a good thing that if a man has given himself to public life he may be sure of remaining in it so long as he has the confidence of a body of electors entitled

to representation. In such conditions he can pursue his career more firmly, he can do better work, he can accumulate more experience than if he is liable to be dismissed at any moment from public life by the few electors whose change determines the result of an election in a single-member constituency. A politician's seat and career should be safe so long as his own supporters are sufficiently large in number to be entitled to a representative and wish to be represented by him. Safe seats are at present, and must be, the exception; a proportional system would make them just so far the rule as they ought to be.

This insecurity of the politician's employment has been praised as a merit of the present system. It has been claimed that it is an advantage that the electorate can at the present moment dismiss its representatives if it disagrees with them—that in fact the present system ensures "democratic control." But the trouble at present is that electors do not as a rule dismiss their own representatives when they change their minds, they dismiss other people's representatives. If five neighbouring constituencies return at a general election five Liberals by majorities of 200 apiece on a 10,000 poll—

Democratic Control.

Smith (Liberal) . . .	5100
Jones (Unionist) . . .	4900

and then by the next general election 150 voters in each constituency have changed their minds so that the result in each case is—

Jones (Unionist) . . .	5050
Smith (Liberal) . . .	4950

what the 150 have done is to dismiss five men who represented (or over-represented) the Liberals of the five constituencies, and to leave the Liberals without representation. The highest right of the 150 (or, taking all the five constituencies together, 750) who changed their views was to change their own representatives. The five constituencies contained on the old division of opinion 25,500 Liberals and 24,500 Unionists, and ought to have been represented by three Liberals and two Unionists; on the new division of opinion they contain 25,250 Unionists and 24,750 Liberals, and ought to be represented by two Liberals and three Unionists;

one Liberal ought to have been dismissed, not five. Only those in close touch with the inner world of politics (and not always they) know how often some promising career has been cut short by the loss of a seat by a man who had every claim to be in parliament, but for whom on his defeat no place in the House can be found. And no one can judge how our politics have suffered from the lack of security of employment which they threaten to an aspirant for a career.

Democracy unfairly discredited.

Violent changes of representation not only damage politicians' careers and curtail their usefulness; they also bring on democratic electorates a reproach of instability which is generally undeserved. A party goes into an election, as the Unionists did in 1906, 372 strong in the House of Commons, and comes out 157. The papers are full of the "landslide." But the percentage of electors who changed their opinions between 1900 and 1906 was only about 18 per cent. Democracies are far less fickle than their critics would have us believe. True representation would make for stability of government, not, as is sometimes thought, for instability.[1]

Arithmetical Failure of present System.

The system of single-member constituencies is not only politically vicious, as giving no true expression to the national will; it is also arithmetically unsound. If one party has large majorities of votes concentrated in a few constituencies, and another has small majorities spread over many constituencies, the second party may well be in a majority in the assembly although it is in a minority in the electorate. That this is no imaginary fear the following figures will show:—

General Election, 1886 (All Constituencies).		
Parties.	Votes obtained.	Seats obtained.
Home Rulers . .	2,103,954	283
Unionists . . .	2,049,137	387

[1] The stability of the government in Belgium since the introduction of proportional representation has been made a ground of complaint against the system.

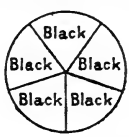
General Election, 1895 (Contested Constituencies).		
Parties.	Votes obtained.	Seats obtained.
Unionists . . .	1,785,372	282
Home Rulers . .	1,823,809	202
General Election, December 1910 (Contested Constituencies in London).		
Parties.	Votes obtained.	Seats obtained.
Unionists . . .	268,127	29
Ministerialists . .	243,722	31

In all these cases the "common will" was directly falsified by the representatives elected. It is needless to add that this incurable defect of the single-member constituency forms the strongest possible temptation to "gerrymandering."[1] For, on the

Gerry-mandering.

[1] That is, to arranging the electoral boundaries in such a way as to give one side an unfair advantage. Thus, in a district more or less circular in shape divided between the adherents of two parties—the Blacks and Whites—the Blacks may be a majority in the whole electorate taken together, but concentrated mainly at the centre. Then, if the district be divided into say five constituencies thus:

It will return four Whites to one Black, while if it is divided thus:



five Blacks will be returned. The figures in the one case being:

No. 1 Constituency.	No. 2 Constituency.	No. 3 Constituency.	No. 4 Constituency.	No. 5 Constituency.
Black 5000	White 3100	White 3100	White 3100	White 3100
White 1000	Black 2900	Black 2900	Black 2900	Black 2900

and in the other,

All Constituencies.
Black 3320
White 2680

the total figures being 16,600 Blacks and 13,400 Whites. A modern example will be found in the *Westminster Gazette* of the 29th April 1914 (I spare susceptibilities by omitting the political names used). "Ten years ago the town was so divided into three wards by 'White' influence as to have one with an overwhelmingly 'Black' and two with small 'White' majorities."

way in which the boundaries of constituencies are drawn may depend the constitution of the parliamentary majority.

To these evil results of the single-member constituency must be added what to some minds is the most serious defect of the system—that there is practically no opportunity for the election of some man of eminence or originality who does not care to stand as the adherent of a party. The possibility of such an election has often been objected to a proportional system as an evil. A well-known politician[1] has spoken with horror of the possibility of a House of Commons consisting largely of independent members. He need not have been alarmed. The number of men who might be so elected is not great. Party organisations will always under any system have all, and perhaps more than all, their due. But the opportunity for an active-minded electorate to return to parliament a man not the tied adherent of a political party, whose right to be heard in the national council is beyond dispute, is an advantage of a rational system of election which alone seems to many minds a conclusive reason for its adoption.

No independent Members.

These results follow from the single-member system when there are only two parties in the State. The arrival of a third party makes the system not only bad, but absurd. We now have three parties in Great Britain. We are not likely to have less. How are they to be represented? First let us look at the question from the point of view of the whole country. A young party such as the Labour party is in a minority in nearly all constituencies. The Labour party in the first thirteen three-cornered contests that took place after the General Election of December 1910 polled about 20 per cent. of the votes and returned not a single member. The single-member system cannot offer to a party of this size any representation so long as it relies only on its own strength. Is it a good thing or a bad thing that a party of this kind should be represented adequately in

A third Party makes the System absurd.

[1] The Right Hon. Lewis Harcourt, in giving evidence before the Royal Commission on Electoral Systems (see page 126, *Representation*, No. 14, September 1909).

parliament? No believer in parliamentary government can hesitate as to the answer. To exclude a young working-class party from parliamentary representation is to play straight into the hands of the supporters of "direct action" and to invite the working classes of this country to destroy a society in whose organisation they have no equal place. The House of Commons must be all-inclusive, if it is to continue to exist. The alternative, sooner or later, is anarchy and another slow struggle upwards from a return of barbarism.

Next, see how the case looks in an individual constituency. Assume that there are three parties of more or less equal strength with distinct programmes and principles. How are they to be represented? Whichever candidate is chosen, the two parties to which he does not belong are treated unjustly. The second ballot, the left-off clothes of continental politics, or the alternative vote, which, though a great improvement in mechanism, is still in principle only the second ballot in a new disguise, have been suggested as remedies.

It may be necessary to describe the mechanism of these devices. The second ballot means that where in a three-cornered fight the man at the head of the poll has not the support of at least one more than half of the voters, a second election is to be held after an interval of a week or, it may be, a fortnight, at which second election only the two candidates who polled most votes at the first election are allowed—whether by law or political custom—to stand. At this second election supporters of the candidates who are at the bottom of the poll have to vote (if they vote at all) not for the man who would really represent them but for that one of the two remaining candidates whom they dislike least.

Second Ballot.

On the other hand, the "alternative vote" is a system by which the elector at the first (and only) election besides indicating his first choice on his voting paper marks the order of his preferences amongst other candidates. That is to say, he marks with a 1 the name of the candidate for whom he votes, and marks with a 2 the name of the candidate to whom his

Or Alternative Vote.

vote is to go if the candidate of his first choice is at the bottom of the poll. Thus a Liberal voter might be supposed to mark his paper thus:—

Brown (Labour) . . .	2
Jones (Unionist) . . .	...
Smith (Liberal) . . .	1

Then if the poll results—

Jones . . .	5000
Brown . . .	4000
Smith . . .	3000

the votes of those supporters of Smith (including our imaginary Liberal voter) who have marked Brown with 2 are transferred to Brown, and the votes of those supporters of Smith who have marked Jones 2 are transferred to Jones. If a sufficient number have marked Brown 2 to give him (counting in the original votes given to each candidate) a clear majority over Jones, Brown is elected. Thus, in this case, if we assume that 2000 Liberal voters marked Brown 2, while 500 marked Jones 2, and 500 marked no 2 at all, the result would be the election of Brown.

	No. of Votes. (First Choices).	Transferred from Smith's 3000.	Result.
Jones . . .	5000	+ 500	5500
Brown . . .	4000	+2000	6000 (*Elected*).
Smith . . .	3000	−3000	...
No further choices .	...	+ 500	...

No Solution.

Now both these methods are mere devices by which the smallest of the three parties, being excluded from representation, is forced to vote for someone who does not represent it. No country which has tried the second ballot is content with it; its evils have been one of the determining causes for the introduction and progress of proportional representation on the continent of Europe.[1] Australian experience seems likely to give the

[1] For confirmation of this view I may refer to the report of the Committee of the French Chamber known as the "Commission du Suffrage Universel," to the effect that "the abolition of the second ballots with the traffic in votes that they cause will not be the least

same result in the case of the alternative vote.[1] On either system the weakest party's vote is up at auction between the two larger parties. Both bid for its support. In one part of a country the vote of the Socialists will go to Conservatives, in another to Liberals. In either case the member elected is, in the French political phrase, "the prisoner of the minority": he is bound by pledges to voters who do not agree with his own views, but whose support he purchased by as much inconsistency as he can square with his political conscience. And the weakest party gets no true representation, but merely a choice of masters. On the next page a table is given that is perhaps more convincing than any elaborate argument. It compares the actual results in three-cornered contests under the present system with the probable and possible results of a system of second ballot or alternative vote. The results are remarkable. The second ballot or alternative vote produces a result further removed from a true representation of the electorate than the present system. The smallest of the three parties has it in its power in a three-cornered contest where it holds the balance (and it did hold the balance in thirteen out of the fourteen contests recorded) to annihilate either of the larger parties; when the Liberal and Labour parties are united they exclude the Unionists from representation, and when the Unionist and Labour men unite, they almost annihilate the Liberals, although the

of the advantages of the new system (proportional representation)." For a particular instance of the evil of the second ballot see the incident recorded by the Rome correspondent of the *Times* on 31st October 1913, when the retirement from the election on the second ballot of the distinguished Italian statesman, the Prince of Teano, was caused by the action of "a considerable party of Republican voters whose support was necessary to his success," and who put forward conditions "which the candidate with justice declared absolutely unacceptable." Observe that with proportional representation both sympathisers with the Prince of Teano and the dissatisfied Republicans would have had their due share of representation without any bargaining with each other or any other party.

[1] For confirmation of this view I may refer to the statement by Mr Holman, the Premier of New South Wales, quoted from the *Sydney Daily Telegraph* of 20th August 1913 to the effect that "preferential voting (the Australian name for the alternative vote) is no better than the second ballot. My view is that there should be proportional representation."

Three-cornered Contests from December 1910 *to January* 1914. *Probable Effect of Second Ballot or Alternative Vote.*[1]

Constituency.	Poll.	Actual Result.	Result in case of Liberal-Labour combination against Unionist.	Result in case of Unionist-Labour combination against Liberal.
N. E. Lanark .	Lib. 7,976 Un. 6,776 Lab. 2,879	Liberal	Liberal	Unionist
Keighley .	Lib. 4,667 Un. 3,842 Lab. 3,452	Liberal	Liberal	Unionist
Kilmarnock Burghs .	Lib. 6,923 Un. 4,637 Lab. 2,761	Liberal	Liberal	Unionist
Oldham . .	Un. 12,255 Lib. 10,623 Lab. 7,448	Unionist	Liberal	Unionist
Holmfirth .	Lib. 4,749 Un. 3,379 Lab. 3,195	Liberal	Liberal	Unionist
Hanley . .	Lib. 6,647 Un. 5,993 Lab. 1,694	Liberal	Liberal	Unionist
Crewe . .	Un. 6,260 Lib. 5,294 Lab. 2,485	Unionist	Liberal	Unionist
E. Carmarthen	Lib. 6,082 Un. 3,354 Lab. 1,089	Liberal	Liberal	Liberal
Midlothian .	Un. 6,021 Lib. 5,989 Lab. 2,413	Unionist	Liberal	Unionist
Houghton-le-Spring .	Lib. 6,930 Un. 4,807 Lab. 4,165	Liberal	Liberal	Unionist
Keighley. .	Lib. 4,730 Un. 3,852 Lab. 3,646	Liberal	Liberal	Unionist
S. Lanark .	Un. 4,257 Lib. 4,006 Lab. 1,674	Unionist	Liberal	Unionist
N. W. Durham	Lib. 7,241 Un. 5,564 Lab. 5,026	Liberal	Liberal	Unionist
Leith Burghs .	Un. 5,159 Lib. 5,143 Lab. 3,346	Unionist	Liberal	Unionist

[1] Only those contests are here shown in which the Labour candidate was officially endorsed by the Executive Committee of the Labour party. There were in addition three-cornered fights at Leicester, Reading, Bethnal Green, and Poplar, etc., in which unofficial Labour or Socialist candidates took part.

Summary of Results.

Party.	Votes.	Seats actually won.	Seats won with Second Ballot or Alternative Vote.	
			With Liberal-Labour combination against Unionist.	With Unionist-Labour combination against Liberal.
Liberal . . .	87,000	9	14	1
Unionist . .	76,156	5	...	13
Labour . . .	45,273	...	...	...

latter are the largest single party. But this power of the smallest party is purely a power of destruction. It remains a minority in Parliament, and probably a smaller minority than on the present system. Sympathisers with Labour will observe that in existing conditions it will be very difficult to return a single member without the aid of Liberal votes, and that in any constituency where the Liberal poll is higher than the Labour (as is still the case even in many constituencies for which a Labour member now sits) the election of a Labour member will be an impossibility. The alternative is to expect a bargain between Liberal and Labour headquarters by which in certain constituencies no Liberal or no Labour candidate will be put forward. To those who are in touch with the extremer Labour views such a suggestion will appear difficult; and even if the bargain were made at headquarters the local organisations could hardly be induced to observe it. With the alternative vote in force such a bargain would be more improbable than it is now. For the one advantage claimed for the alternative vote from the Liberal and Labour point of view is that Liberal and Labour candidatures could be started in the same constituency without one injuring the other. The exact reverse is the truth: the alternative vote would put the Labour party at the mercy of the Liberals.[1]

Such is our actual electoral system. It does not secure the consent of the majority of the governed; it disfranchises minorities; it deadens political life; it does not set free those new forces and stimuli which, in whatever class of society they arise, are the real hope of the future.

[1] It is worth recording that the Labour Party Conference at Glasgow in January 1914 refused to commit itself either to the alternative vote or proportional representation.

THE PROPORTIONAL SYSTEM

THE different systems of proportional representation need not here be discussed and analysed.[1] There are said to be some 300 systems in existence, and the ingenuity of inventors shows no sign of exhaustion. The unkindest thing that a proportionalist can do is to invent a system; unfortunately, the joys of paternity often outweigh the call of an ascetic devotion. It will be enough to give a brief account of the system known as that of the "single transferable vote," as being that which has on the whole obtained more support in this country and the British Dominions than any of its rivals. If any one prefer one of the many "list" systems which are in force or fashion on the continent of Europe, I have no quarrel with him now—and perhaps never. Such matters can wait. The great matter is to destroy the idea that local majorities alone are entitled to the elementary privileges of citizenship. Establish the idea that the just representation of 70,000 electors, of whom 40,000 are Whites, 20,000 are Reds, and 10,000 are Greens, is not by seven White members of parliament, but by four White, two Red, and one Green member of parliament, and the rest will follow. When this is done, it will be time enough to allot the spoils.

Proportional Systems.

But the account of the system may be prefaced with a caution. No system can be perfect. No system can give representation which is exact to two places of decimals. No system is proof against every kind of abuse or folly. Every system has to be worked by human beings, and

[1] For a full account and criticism of the principal systems, readers are referred to John H. Humphreys' *Proportional Representation*, Methuen & Co., London, June 1911 (5s. net), and the publications of the Proportional Representation Society, 179 St Stephen's House, Westminster Bridge, London, S.W.

will reproduce their ignorance as well as their knowledge, their passions as well as their reason, their greed as well as their nobler aspirations, the pettiness of smaller as well as the greatness of wider minds. A representative system reproduces humanity: if it gives scope for finer brains and higher spirits, equally it will not hide or abolish the lower side of man. And when a reform and its results are judged, the true standard of comparison is not with some ideal and unattainable excellence, but with the conditions that obtained at its introduction. A proportional system must be compared not with the imagined possibilities of Utopia, but with the majority system that obtains to-day.

Practically all systems of proportional representation agree in this, that they require constituencies returning several—at the very least three—members.[1] And this for the simple reason that when a constituency returns only one member, the representation cannot be divided. It necessarily falls to a single party or body of electors to the exclusion of all other parties and electors. In other words, it is not proportional.

Multi-membered Constituencies.

Thus, the first step in the introduction of a system of proportional representation—or at any rate of the system of the single transferable vote, or of any continental system of "lists"—is the creation of constituencies returning several members.[2] The number of members that each constituency should return would be governed either by the number of its electorate, or of its population—whichever basis were approved by parliament. The constituencies themselves should, wherever possible, be local government units—great cities or counties. This, no doubt, would not be possible in many cases, but, as far as may be, what may be called natural lines of division should be followed. The new

[1] The *average* number of members per constituency suggested in the Parliamentary Bill prepared by the Proportional Representation Society is 5·2. See Appendix.

[2] In Oregon an ingenious system has been devised by which single-member constituencies are in appearance retained, but this at the cost of the formal recognition of parties by the State authorities in such a manner that a candidate in one district can legally be identified as of the same party as a candidate in another district.

constituencies once created, redistribution in the future would be simplified enormously. As population shifted or increased, no alteration of boundaries would be needed. It would be enough to alter the number of members allotted to a constituency. The only case for alteration of boundaries would be where local government areas were altered by the expansion or creation of a city or county borough.

Redistribution becomes unnecessary.

The constituency thus created, how are the different elements in the electorate to be represented? The constituency returning several members already exists with us; in municipal boroughs we have wards returning three, six, and sometimes nine members, but we do not thereby secure a just representation. We either have one member retiring every year, so that in each ward there is only one vacancy at each election—our provincial system; or, when all the members vacate office together, we elect their three, six, or nine successors by the block vote—our metropolitan system.

Method of Election within the Constituency.

Now the "block vote" is the negation of proportionality; it allows every elector as many votes as there are vacancies to be filled, but it forbids him to give more than one vote to any one candidate. Hence if there are nine seats vacant, and three parties in the constituency—901 Reds, 900 Pinks, and 899 Whites—and each party puts forward nine candidates and each elector votes his full party "ticket," the nine Red candidates head the poll with 901 votes apiece, and not a single Pink or White candidate is returned. Results very nearly as absurd as this extreme example have occurred before now in metropolitan borough elections.

The Block Vote.

The first obvious amendment to this block vote system is to limit each elector to one vote only; and this is the plan of the single vote in multi-member constituencies actually in force in Japan. But this amendment taken by itself produces a system that is open to serious objection, for while it makes it certain that a compact minority of a certain size will secure a representative, it may do grave injustice as between the larger parties. An example will best illustrate the meaning.

Single Vote.

Suppose that a body of 115[1] persons have to elect five representatives, and that there are in the body 70 Unionists, 25 Liberals, and 20 Labour men. The just representation is three Unionists, one Liberal, and one Labour man. Assume that there are four Unionist candidates, three Liberal, and one Labour. Now, the Labour candidate *must* be elected if all the Labour voters vote for him; because he will then poll 20 votes, and all the Unionists and Liberals added together can muster only 95 votes, and out of 95 you cannot get five candidates each with 20[2] votes. Therefore, the Labour candidate with 20 votes must be, at the lowest, fifth on the poll and so elected. But, as between the Unionists and the Liberals, the number of candidates elected will depend on the skilful drilling of the electors, and the exact knowledge by the party managers of the party's electoral strength. In the absence of organisation and exact fore-knowledge we might easily get a result such as this (if the names of well-known politicians may be borrowed to illustrate the meaning):

Bonar Law (Unionist)	50	Elected.
Snowden (Labour)	20	
Asquith (Liberal)	14	
Robert Cecil (Unionist)	11	
Lloyd George (Liberal)	7	
Chamberlain (Unionist)	5	Not elected.
Banbury (Unionist)	4	
Harcourt (Liberal)	4	

The five men at the head of the poll, and therefore elected, include two Unionists and two Liberals, although the number of Unionist electors is about three times that of the Liberal electors. The system thus gives an almost

[1] I take this small number for convenience and simplicity of illustration. Readers can easily imagine the figures raised by the addition of '000 to approximate to the conditions of a parliamentary election. The 115 is not unlike the number that elect to the Senate of South Africa.

[2] In the case supposed 20 is in fact the minimum number of votes that makes a candidate's election certain, a number called the "quota." See page 38.

unintelligibly unjust result—which is worse than the intelligible injustice of the block system pure and simple. A further improvement thus becomes imperative.

The Single Vote must be made Transferable.

Now, the falsity of the result is caused by the excessive concentration of the Unionist votes on Mr Bonar Law. He has many more votes than were necessary to elect him, and if the votes he did not need could have passed on to Mr Chamberlain, Mr Chamberlain would have been brought up above Mr Lloyd George, and even above Mr Asquith, and elected. The problem is thus to devise a means of making the votes of Mr Bonar Law, so far as not necessary for his election, available for the other candidates of the Unionist party—assuming always that the electors who vote for Mr Law would also wish to see the other Unionists elected, if this is possible. The problem is solved by adopting the same machinery as we have already seen used in the case of the alternative vote—that is, by allowing the elector to mark his preferences by the figures 1, 2, 3, and so on, set against the names of candidates on the ballot papers, and making the vote transferable accordingly. Now, if in our imaginary election Mr Law's 50 votes had been thus transferable, and if all his fifty voters had marked one or other of the remaining Unionist candidates with the figure 2, Mr Law could have been content to keep 20 votes and hand on 30 to the other Unionists; and the result might have been:

Law (50 – 30)	20	Elected.
Snowden	20	
Chamberlain (5 + 15)	20	
Cecil (11 + 9)	20	
Asquith	14	
Banbury (4 + 6)	10	Not elected.
Lloyd George	7	
Harcourt	4	

which is a just result—three Unionists, one Labour candidate, and one Liberal being elected.

There has been much discussion as to the exact method of transferring the excess or surplus votes of an elected

candidate, and it is agreed on all hands that in making the transfer regard must be had to the rights of the candidates who are to be the transferees. The rules of the system usually known as that of the "single transferable vote" are framed so as to meet this point. Thus, in the illustration Mr Law is supposed to have 50 votes, of which he only needs a quota of 20 to make his own election secure. He can spare 30—that is, three-fifths of his total poll. To whom are the 30 votes to go? The answer is—the 30 votes are to go where the electors wish them to go. And the returning officer finds out where the electors wish them to go by examining the ballot papers on which Mr Law is marked 1, and seeing what names are marked 2 thereon. In this case let us suppose the 50 voting papers to be marked with No. 2's as follows :—

Transfer of Surplus Votes of Elected Candidates.

On	10	papers	Banbury	is	marked	2
„	15	„	Cecil	„		„
„	25	„	Chamberlain	„		„
	50					

Mr Law can spare 30 out of his 50 votes—that is, three-fifths. Therefore he can spare to Sir F. Banbury three-fifths of the 10 on which *he* is marked 2, *i.e.* 6; to Lord Robert Cecil, three-fifths of the 15 on which *he* is marked 2, *i.e.* 9; and to Mr A. Chamberlain, three-fifths of the 25 on which *he* is marked 2, *i.e.* 15; and 6, 9, and 15 votes are accordingly transferred to Sir F. Banbury, Lord Robert Cecil, and Mr Chamberlain, as their proper share in Mr Law's surplus.

But a provision for transferring the excess, or useless, votes of an elected candidate is not the only provision for transfer that is necessary if a true result is to be reached. It is not enough to provide for excessive concentration. Excessive diffusion must also be guarded against. Otherwise a party may waste its votes by reason of having miscalculated its strength and running too many candidates.

And of all Votes of hopeless Candidates.

Thus the figures of our imaginary election, instead of those previously given, might have been:

Law	20	Elected.
Snowden	20	
Chamberlain	20	
Cecil	19	
Banbury	11	
Asquith	10	Not Elected.
Lloyd George	9	
Harcourt	6	

in which case the Liberals will have lost their solitary representative. To meet this difficulty the lowest candidate, Harcourt, must be excluded from the poll and the votes that otherwise are wasted on him must be made available (if the electors wish it) to put Asquith above Banbury, and give the Liberals their one seat. In other words, voters who have voted for Harcourt, whose election is hopeless, must be allowed to transfer their votes to candidates whose election is possible. The Liberals must be allowed to concentrate their strength on the candidate or candidates of their choice. They can do this if their votes are transferable, not otherwise.

In the case of the transfer of the votes of an excluded candidate it will be seen that no question of any proportional transfer arises. The excluded candidate has no quota: *all* his votes are transferred to the candidates indicated as next preferences by the electors. Thus, if we assume that of the six voters who voted for Harcourt as No. 1, five marked Asquith and one marked Lloyd George as No. 2, then, as a result of Harcourt's exclusion, 5 votes are transferred to Asquith and 1 to Lloyd George, making Asquith's total 15 and Lloyd George's 10, and we have again as the result[1] the election of three Unionists, one Labour man, and one Liberal.

Law	20	Elected.
Snowden	20	
Chamberlain	20	
Cecil	19	
Asquith (10+5)	15	
Banbury	11	Not elected.
Lloyd George (9+1)	10	
Harcourt (6−6)	...	Excluded.

[1] To work out the election completely Lloyd George's votes would have now to be transferred, but unless 4 of them go to Banbury and none to Asquith, this transfer will not alter the result.

Details of System.

The ballot paper presented to the elector in our imaginary election would have looked something like this:

Order of Preference.	Names of Candidates.
	ASQUITH, The Rt. Hon. H. H.
	BANBURY, Sir Frederick.
	CECIL, Lord Robert.
	CHAMBERLAIN, The Rt. Hon. J. Austen.
	GEORGE, The Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd.
	HARCOURT, The Rt. Hon. Lewis.
	LAW, The Rt. Hon. A. Bonar.
	SNOWDEN, Philip.

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS.

Place the figure **1** opposite the candidate **whom you prefer.**

You are also invited to place

The figure **2** opposite the name of your **second choice.**

The figure **3** opposite the name of your **third choice,** and so on, numbering as many candidates as you please in the order of your preference.

NOTE.—The paper will be valid if only the figure 1 is marked, but voters are advised to number in the order of their preference the names of all candidates whom they would desire to see elected. The paper will be spoiled if the figure 1 is placed opposite the name of more than one candidate.

The elector (as appears from the instructions) votes by placing the figure 1 against the name of the candidate who is his first choice, and he need do nothing more. He may, however, and he is invited to, indicate his further preferences by placing the figures 2, 3, 4, etc., against the names of other candidates whom he would wish to see elected if the candidate he likes best cannot use that elector's vote. This is all that the elector has to do. The rest is the task of the returning officer, who, when he comes to count the votes

credits the elector's vote to the candidate whom the elector has marked with the figure 1. Every candidate who obtains a certain proportion of votes (this proportion is called the "quota") is elected. If a candidate has obtained more than a quota of votes, the returning officer carries forward the votes in excess to those candidates marked on the ballot papers by voters as their next preference. If a second-choice candidate (*i.e.* a candidate marked 2) does not need the vote, the returning officer transfers it to the third-choice (*i.e.* the candidate marked 3), and so on. The votes transferred to a candidate are added to the votes originally obtained by him, and whenever a candidate's total reaches the quota, he is elected.

After all surplus votes have been transferred there may still remain vacancies to be filled, and the candidates unelected may be in excess of the number of those vacancies. In that case the candidate at the bottom of the poll is excluded, and his votes, instead of being wasted, are transferred to those candidates who are marked on his ballot papers as the voters' next choice. The votes thus transferred to other candidates are added to the votes already obtained by them; whenever a candidate's total is equal to the quota, he is declared elected. In this way each quota of electors obtains one representative, and in building up these quotas the returning officer is guided always by the wishes expressed by the electors on their ballot papers. Towards the end of an election it sometimes happens that the number of candidates remaining unelected and not excluded is equal to the number of vacancies remaining unfilled. In this case the remaining candidates are declared elected even though they have fewer votes than the quota.

The method by which the "quota" is determined needs explanation. The "quota," as already explained, is that proportion of the votes which necessarily secures the election of a candidate. Now, if there is only one candidate to be elected, it is quite clear that the quota is one more than half of the votes, for no other candidate can obtain this number. For instance the candidate who obtains 51 out of 100 votes in a single-

Quota.

member constituency is sure of election. Similarly, in a two-member constituency, any candidate who obtains more than one-third of the votes must be elected. The quota in this case would be one more than a third. If there are 100 votes, only two candidates can poll as many as 34 each. Similarly, in a three-member constituency, the candidate who obtains more than one-fourth (26 out of 100) is sure of election; in a four-member constituency, one more than a fifth, and so on. In general terms, the quota is found by dividing the total number of votes polled by one more than the number of seats and by adding one to the result so obtained.

Effect of System.

It thus appears that the effect of the vote being made transferable is to ensure that all parties or divisions of opinion receive their fair share of the representation. The elector entering the polling booth does not know whether his favourite will receive more support than he requires or whether he will receive so little as to have no chance of election. A popular candidate may receive, say, 3000 votes when he needs only 2000. The votes given in excess would be lost to those who agree with him if they were not transferable. Or, again, a party may have scattered its votes over too many candidates and might (if the votes are not transferable) lose the representation which it otherwise would gain. In either case the elector's vote may be wasted.

The transferable vote provides against both these contingencies. It enables the elector to indicate the candidate of his second and further choice to whom his vote can be transferred—

(1) When his first choice has more votes than he requires; or,

(2) When, after all excess votes have been transferred, the elector's first choice is at the bottom of the poll.

Security of Minority of "Quota" Size.

The secrecy of the ballot is preserved, and yet the electors are allowed to combine into groups of the necessary size or "quota." If any body of electors contains three such groups it will win three seats; if it contains two of these groups it will obtain two seats. And if it contains only one such group it obtains one member, and no combination of other parties,

no bargain between headquarters, no skilful orders to electors can possibly prevent a number of electors in the constituency equal to the quota from obtaining the representative of their choice. This is the peculiar merit of the system. Let popular feeling run never so strong, a firm and compact minority who have the courage and consistency to stand together will get into the House of Commons as many representatives of their own choice as their own numbers entitle them to have.

Some readers will find the statement of the procedure of an election under the single transferable vote complicated; all readers will, I fear, find it dull. Indeed, I feel that it is a little like trying to explain a game of cricket by an exposition of the text of the rules. The best advice to give to a student is to go and see the game played, and so I would refer readers to the account of an actual election in Tasmania given a little later on.[1] But those who have struggled through so far may be asked to see—or rather to visualise—the process somewhat in this way: let them imagine the voters as three crowds of people—Conservatives, about 20,000 strong; Liberals, about 20,000; and Socialists, about 10,000—who come to elect five persons. They come to be numbered, like the barbarian armies of old, on a level space where are built eight enclosures, one for each of the eight candidates—four Conservative, three Liberal, and one Socialist—who are contesting the election; and each enclosure is so constructed as to be capable of containing, when full, a fixed number of voters—the fixed number being the "quota."[2] The candidates stand at the gates of their enclosures, and the crowds as they come fill up first the enclosure of the most popular candidate.[3] As soon as an enclosure is filled the doors are shut: no more voters are wanted or can be admitted inside; and until the election is over no voter inside can be allowed to "multiply himself" by passing out and being counted in another enclosure.

Visualisation of a Proportional Representation Election.

[1] See p. 43.

[2] The quota for 50,000 electors and five seats is $\frac{50,000}{6} + 1 = 8334$.

[3] That is, their votes are credited to the candidate they mark 1 on their ballot paper.

A voter who wishes to vote for a candidate whose enclosure is already filled is told that he cannot do so, but must make his choice among those candidates whose enclosures still have room for more voters.[1] At last the whole of the three crowds are distributed among the enclosures; it is found that the Conservatives have filled the enclosure of one of their four candidates completely and the enclosure of another very nearly, while to the two others they have sent only a handful of voters. The Liberals have not filled any one enclosure completely, but have distributed themselves fairly evenly over their three enclosures. The Socialists have filled their one enclosure, and those of their voters who could not obtain admission there have refused to enter any other enclosure.[2] The candidates—one Conservative and one Socialist—whose enclosures are full, are at once declared elected, and then the occupants of the enclosure containing the smallest number of voters (a Conservative enclosure in this case) are told that, as there is apparently no prospect that their enclosure will ever be full, they are at liberty to come out and enter any other enclosure—not being that of an elected candidate.[3] Most of the voters will take advantage of this liberty and move to the Conservative enclosure which is nearly full; some will not.[2] There is no compulsion to enter an enclosure if you do not wish to do so. Suppose that this move fills the Conservative[4] enclosure that was nearly full; thereupon that enclosure is shut and its candidate elected. The election proceeds by the emptying in the same way of the enclosure with the next smallest number of voters and the self-distribution of its occupants; we may expect that when the least-crowded of the three Liberal enclosures is emptied, its occupants will go and fill up the other two Liberal enclosures and two Liberal candidates be elected. The election may end in one of two ways: either (1) as many enclosures are filled as there were candidates to

[1] *I.e.*, his vote is transferred to the candidate whom he has marked No. 2, or, where No. 2 is already elected, by a higher figure.

[2] A voter need only mark a candidate with a 1; he is not bound to indicate a second preference.

[3] This is the exclusion of the candidate lowest on the poll and the distribution of his ballot papers.

[4] Conservative No. 2 obtains the quota.

be elected; or (2), owing to the fact that many voters on being turned out of the enclosure of their first choice have refused to enter another, there may remain one or two enclosures only partially full but equal in number to the unfilled vacancies, and at this point, as all the electors not in an enclosure have walked away, the candidates to whom the remaining enclosures belong are elected whether their enclosures are full or not. In other words, each crowd elects as many candidates as it can fill enclosures, and if a number of enclosures equal to the number of vacancies is not completely filled by voters, the candidates who have the largest number of supporters are elected even if their enclosures are short of their full complement.

Fairness of Results.

That this procedure would produce results which as between the parties are as fair as the conditions will allow, may be made to appear to readers who are doubtful of its practical effects, from the results of the Tasmanian elections for 1909, 1912, and 1913, and of the Johannesburg Municipal Elections in 1911. These results were :—

Year of Election.	Party.	Votes.	Seats in proportion to Votes.	Seats actually obtained.
TASMANIA.				
1909	Labour . .	19,067	11·69	12
	Liberal . .	29,893	18·31	18
1912	Labour . .	33,634	13·66	14
	Liberal . .	40,252	16·34	16
1913	Labour . .	31,633	13·79	14
	Liberal . .	36,157	15·78	16
	Independent .	977	0·43	...
JOHANNESBURG.				
1911	Labour . .	7,457	10·6	11
	Non-Labour .	13,680	19·4	19

The results of all these elections do not merely show that the new methods are fair, they also show that the ordinary elector finds no serious difficulty in the new procedure.

The percentage of spoilt votes due to the proportional system in Tasmania is reported by the Tasmanian Chief Electoral Officer as 2·87.[1] But, indeed, the objection that a proportional system is impracticable is now rarely heard. It cannot decently be argued before an audience of British voters that they cannot perform operations the same as or similar to those which Tasmanians, Johannesburgers, Swedes, Belgians, Swiss, Finns accomplish without difficulty.

No Difficulty to Electors.

The practical working of the single transferable vote may be illustrated by an account of the polling in one of the constituencies (Wilmot) at the 1912 General Election for the Tasmanian House of Assembly. The constituency returned six members. It was contested by six "Liberal" (in Australian politics all non-Labour parties have fused under this name) and four Labour candidates. The total number of votes cast was 13,013, and the quota was therefore $\frac{13,013}{(6+1)}+1$, or 1860. The total number of Liberal voters (taking those voters who marked a Liberal candidate No. 1 as Liberals) was 8587; of Labour voters (reckoned on a similar basis), 4426. The result was the election of four Liberal and two Labour candidates.

The first step in the work of the returning officer was to count to each candidate the ballot papers on which he was marked No. 1. This gave the following result:—

Lyons (Labour)	2,326
Lee (Liberal)	1,823
Mulcahy (Liberal)	1,603
Hays (Liberal)	1,536
Cameron (Liberal)	1,385
Best (Liberal)	1,184
Field (Liberal)	1,056
Curwen (Labour)	775
Shackcloth (Labour)	668
O'Keefe (Labour)	657
Total	13,013

[1] A full report of the General Election of 30th April 1909 has been published by the Tasmanian Government—Tasmania, 1909, No. 34.

and therefore Lyons as having more than the "quota" (1860) was declared elected.

The returning officer then distributed[1] Lyons' surplus of 466 votes (2326 − 1860 = 466), and this surplus, as might have been expected, went mainly to the three other Labour candidates, O'Keefe receiving 181, Curwen 133, and Shackcloth 105 additional votes, and a few sporadic votes going to the Liberals. The poll then stood:

Lyons (Labour) (2326 − 466) . .	1860	Elected
Lee (Liberal) (1823 + 2) . . .	1825	
Mulcahy (Liberal) (1603 + 19) .	1622	
Hays (Liberal) (1536 + 4) . .	1540	
Cameron (Liberal) (1385 + 12) .	1397	
Best (Liberal) (1184 + 3) . .	1187	
Field (Liberal) (1056 + 3) . .	1059	
Curwen (Labour) (775 + 133) . .	908	
O'Keefe (Labour) (657 + 181) . .	838	
Shackcloth (Labour) (668 + 105) .	773	

It will be seen that the distribution of the Labour surplus altered the relative position of the Labour candidates, O'Keefe and Shackcloth, but gave no candidate the quota.

As no candidate had now any surplus, the next step was to start at the bottom of the poll and exclude the lowest candidate (Shackcloth) and distribute his 773 votes. The effect of this was largely to increase the votes of Shackcloth's fellow Labour candidates, Curwen and O'Keefe; votes which would otherwise have gone to Lyons (who is already elected) as next preference, being

[1] The Tasmanian system of distributing the surplus votes is slightly different from that indicated in the imaginary example already given. Each transferable paper is carried forward at the fractional value which represents the portion of the vote not required for building up the "quota" of the successful candidate. The number of votes credited to the transferee is ascertained by multiplying the number of papers to be transferred to him by this "transfer value." The number thus ascertained usually contains a fraction which is disregarded, with the result that a few votes are lost in the process of transfer. In the English rules no votes are lost, but the largest proportional remainders are treated as of the value of unity.

carried on to the next succeeding preference. The result was:

Lyons (Labour)	1860	Elected
Lee (Liberal) (1825+6) . .	1831	
Mulcahy (Liberal) (1622+17) .	1639	
Hays (Liberal) (1540+1) . .	1541	
Cameron (Liberal) (1397+21) .	1418	
O'Keefe (Labour) (838+508) .	1346	
Best (Liberal) (1187+2) . .	1189	
Curwen (Labour) (908+213) .	1121	
Field (Liberal) (1059+2) . .	1061	
Shackcloth (Labour) (773−773)	...	Excluded

O'Keefe had now a substantial majority over Curwen, and both had been advanced above the Liberal, Field, who, being at the bottom of the poll, and no candidate having a surplus, was next excluded. The result was the election of the two leading Liberal candidates, only a few sporadic votes going to the Labour men:—

Lyons (Labour). . . .	1860	Elected
Lee (Liberal) (1831+348) .	2179	Elected
Mulcahy (Liberal) (1639+305).	1944	Elected
Hays (Liberal) (1541+182) .	1723	
Cameron (Liberal) (1418+77).	1495	
O'Keefe (Labour) (1346+27) .	1373	
Best (Liberal) (1189+110) .	1299	
Curwen (Labour) (1121+9) .	1130	
Field (Liberal) (1061−1061) .	...	Excluded
Shackcloth (Labour) . . .	...	Excluded

The next steps of the returning officer were to transfer the two "secondary" surpluses of the two elected Liberals, Lee and Mulcahy, one after the other, both of them having more than the quota; a third Liberal, Hays, completed his quota by votes obtained from Lee, and his surplus was distributed in its turn, leaving the poll as follows:—

Lyons (Labour).	1860	Elected
Lee (Liberal)	1860	Elected
Mulcahy (Liberal)	1860	Elected
Hays (Liberal)	1860	Elected
Cameron (Liberal) (1495+32+12+2)	1541	
Best (Liberal) (1299+89+61+17) .	1466	
O'Keefe (Labour) (1373+5+1+0) .	1379	
Curwen (Labour) (1130+5+0+0) .	1135	
Field (Liberal)	...	Excluded
Shackcloth (Labour) . . .	...	Excluded

Then followed the transfer of Curwen's votes. The largest portion of these fell to the share of O'Keefe, securing his election, but as many as 382 had refused to vote for any of the unelected candidates, and their votes accordingly were non-transferable. After Curwen's votes had been thus transferred, O'Keefe's surplus of 145 votes was dealt with. Of these, no less than 131 were found to be non-transferable, there being no Labour candidate left in the running, so that this operation made no change in the relative position of the non-elected candidates, Cameron and Best, with 1634 and 1510 votes respectively. As only one place now remained to be filled, Cameron, as the higher on the poll, was declared elected, although he had not a full quota, and the final result of the pole was:

Lyons (Labour)	1860	Elected.
Lee (Liberal)	1860	
Mulcahy (Liberal)	1860	
Hays (Liberal)	1860	
O'Keefe (Labour)	1860	
Cameron (Liberal)	1634	
Best (Liberal)	1510	Not elected.
Curwen (Labour)	...	
Field (Liberal)	...	
Shackcloth (Labour)	...	

The whole process is shown in tabular form on the opposite page.

Criticisms on the Single Transferable Vote.

The system of the single transferable vote is the direct descendant of the Hare system, but in the course of the generations it has varied a little from the type of its ancestors. We are, however, not now concerned with its history, but with its merits, here and now, as a working machine.[1] Two main criticisms[2] have been made on the single transferable vote as a working machine. They are: (1) that it attributes too high

[1] J. C. Meredith, of Trinity College, Dublin, has made an interesting suggestion for what he considers an improvement of detail (see his book on *Proportional Representation*, Dublin, Edward Ponsonby; London, Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co., 1913, page 92).

[2] See Report of the Royal Commission on Electoral Systems, 1910, Cd. 5163, par. 127.

Tasmanian House of Assembly—General Election, 1912.

RESULT SHEET FOR DISTRICT OF WILMOT.

No. of Votes, 13,013. No. of Seats, 6. Quota = $\frac{13,013}{7} + 1 = 1,860$.

Names of Candidates.	1st Count.	2nd Count.		3rd Count.		4th Count.		5th Count.		6th Count.		7th Count.		8th Count.		9th Count.		Elected.
		Transfer of Lyons' Surplus.	Result.	Transfer of Shackcloth's Votes.	Result.	Transfer of Field's Votes.	Result.	Transfer of Lee's Surplus.	Result.	Transfer of Mulcahy's Surplus.	Result.	Transfer of Hays' Surplus.	Result.	Transfer of Curwen's Votes.	Result.	Transfer of O'Keefe's Surplus.	Result.	
Best (Lib.) .	1,184	+ 3	1,187	+ 2	1,189	+ 110	1,299	+ 89	1,388	+ 61	1,449	+ 17	1,466	+ 44	1,510	...	1,510	...
Cameron (Lib.) .	1,385	+ 12	1,397	+ 21	1,418	+ 77	1,495	+ 32	1,527	+ 12	1,539	+ 2	1,541	+ 81	1,622	+ 12	1,634	Cameron (Lib.)
Curwen (Lab.) .	775	+ 133	908	+ 213	1,121	+ 9	1,130	+ 5	1,135	...	1,135	...	1,135	− 1135	...	...	...	...
Field (Lib.) .	1,056	+ 3	1,059	+ 2	1,061	− 1061	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Hays (Lib.) .	1,536	+ 4	1,540	+ 1	1,541	+ 182	1,723	+ 159	1,882	...	1,882	− 22	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	Hays (Lib.)
Lee (Lib.) .	1,823	+ 2	1,825	+ 6	1,831	+ 348	2,179	− 319	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	Lee (Lib.)
Lyons (Lab.) .	2,326	− 466	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	Lyons (Lab.)
Mulcahy (Lib.) .	1,603	+ 19	1,622	+ 17	1,639	+ 305	1,944	...	1,944	− 84	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	...	1,860	Mulcahy Lib.)
O'Keefe (Lab.) .	657	+ 181	838	+ 508	1,346	+ 27	1,373	+ 5	1,378	+ 1	1,379	...	1,379	+ 626	2,005	− 145	1,860	O'Keefe (Lab.)
Shackcloth (Lab.)	668	+ 105	773	− 773	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
*Votes lost by omitting fractional remainders	...	+ 4	4	+ 3	7	+ 2	9	+ 3	12	+ 3	15	+ 2	17	+ 2	19	+ 2	21	...
Non-transferable papers . .	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	+ 26	27	+ 7	34	+ 1	35	+ 382	417	+ 131	548	...
Totals .	13,013	...	13,013	...	13,013	...	13,013	...	13,013	...	13,013	...	13,013	...	13,013	...	13,013	...

* See note on p. 44.

a value to the later preferences of a voter; and (2) that it makes no proper provision for by-elections.

To take these points in order. It is said that the system gives in effect the same value—namely, unity—to a figure that may be as high as 8 or 9—according to the number of candidates—or even higher; and suggestions have been made for counting the figure 1 as worth one vote, the figure 2 half a vote, and so on. The criticism and the suggestion both proceed from a misunderstanding of the theory of the system, and will occasion little difficulty to a reader who keeps in his mind the illustration of the "enclosures" given above. Each elector has one vote and one vote only. The preferences marked by him are not so many votes or degrees of votes: they are indications as to the person to whom his vote—his one and only vote—is to go. Now, it is an unfounded assumption that in the voter's mind his preference as between candidates whom he marked 5 and 6 respectively is not as strong as his preference as between candidates marked 1 and 2. It may very well be far stronger. For the candidate whom he marked 5 may be the last candidate of his own party, and the candidate he marked 6 may be a candidate of another party whom, as his own party has no further use for his vote, he prefers to other candidates on the list, but who in his mind is separated by a wide gulf from the man marked 5. A Unionist having to choose between a Labour enclosure and the enclosure of a Unionist will be in no difficulty. On the other hand, the men whom he marks 1 and 2 may be, in his judgment, both excellent candidates, two leaders of his own party between whom he finds it difficult to judge. These later preferences only come into play (and that in the case only of a very small percentage[1] of voters) at a late stage of the counting, when all the candidates higher in the preferences of the voter have either been elected or excluded from the poll; but, nevertheless, the vote of the particular voter who marked the voting paper in question has not been used. This voter is in the same position as he would have been in the

[1] See the Report of the Tasmanian Committee quoted on p. 165 and foll. of *Proportional Representation* by John H. Humphreys, Methuen & Co., 1912, 5s. net.

days before the Ballot Act had he come to the poll in person and been told by the returning officer that the candidates whom he most desired to see elected were no longer available, but that, if he wished to vote at all, he must make his choice between the remaining candidates. Now, no one would suggest that a choice made openly under these conditions was not a perfectly good vote, an effective expression of the voter's choice, and to be counted as such. The preferences of the voter might well be—probably are—as well marked as between the remaining candidates as are a voter's preferences in a single-member constituency between the two or three candidates presented for his choice. The actual results of elections that have taken place under the system lend no support to the theory that the electors in giving their late preferences do not vote as "politically" as in giving their earlier preferences. The balance of parties in the Johannesburg municipal election and in the Tasmanian elections has always been exactly true to the proportions of No. 1 votes given to each party. The theory that the elector cannot distinguish a Unionist from a Liberal when he gets to No. 5 or 6 on his list is an assumption of a hostile critic, and has no support in the facts. For be it remembered that the ordinary man votes for all the members of his own party first, and not until they are all elected or eliminated—that is, not until he is in the position of an elector in a single-member constituency with the alternative vote, whose own candidate is at the bottom of the poll in a three-cornered contest—does any preference that he may have indicated as between his opponents come into play.

By-elections.

The second criticism is that the system is inapplicable to by-elections. Perhaps this objection gets a disproportionate amount of attention because public discussions of electoral methods have often followed a by-election. It seems to be generally agreed that by-elections form so vital a part of our political machinery that they must be maintained at any reasonable cost, and, if so, it must at once be agreed that a method of election which requires several vacancies before it can work satisfactorily is inapplicable to a single vacancy. Merely to hold an election

over the whole constituency, if a single vacancy occurs, as is the practice in Tasmania,[1] is to assure to the local majority a seat at the expense of the local minority, even if the vacancy has occurred in the ranks of the minority. Some modification is therefore necessary in the case of by-elections. The following solution is proposed. Each of the large constituencies must be subdivided into wards; each member on his election and in the order of election will choose one ward, which will be his own in this special sense that, if, owing to his death or retirement, a by-election is necessary, it will be held in and for that ward alone. Members may be expected to choose the ward in which their own support is strongest. The value of the by-election as a measure of the drift of popular feeling can be retained by making it necessary for the returning officer to count separately at the general election the votes recorded in each ward and publish the figures. This would show what was the party strength at the general election in the ward. In the event of a by-election, the drift of public feeling could then be gauged by comparing the figures at that election with those of the general election. Further, the publication of the figures in each ward at the general election would assist members in their choice of a ward. As the number of members in the House of Commons would remain the same as at present, a ward would be about the size of one of the existing constituencies.

[1] The Tasmanian system of by-elections is at the present time (1914), with the almost exact equality of parties in the colony, causing no little difficulty.

SOME APPLICATIONS OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

THE FEDERAL SOLUTION, SECOND CHAMBERS, MUNICIPALITIES.

Federalism.

IT is highly probable that in some form or other the future constitution of these Islands will at an early date become what is popularly called federal.[1] Most Liberals believe it, though they may differ as to the stages and the rapidity of the coming change. Many, if not most, Unionists acquiesce in the belief, and even actively promote the spread of the federal idea. The Irish Nationalists have nothing to say against it, if their own share be adequate. Labour men would welcome a policy which would set free local parliaments for social legislation. Now, a federal solution is justified by two conditions: first, there must be sufficient difference between the component parts of the federation to entitle each to a special organ of legislation; and, second, there must be sufficient similarity of civilisation to make possible the federal union. But the general apprehension of those Unionists who are opponents of federalism for these Islands is that the federal tie may be too weak; that the difference between England on the one hand and Ireland on the other may be so pronounced as to lead to the total break-up of the federal state, with a resulting war of conquest as the only alternative to complete separation. And to allay these fears any reasonable step should be taken which

[1] I am well aware that the use of the term "federal" in this connection is, from the point of view of constitutional science, inelegant if not inaccurate. But here as elsewhere the public makes its own terminology.

may keep the political parties of each component state alive to the existence in the other states of men in sympathy with themselves. In this connection the lesson of the American Civil War should not be forgotten. A committee of the United States Senate reported in 1869 that the war might have been averted had the minorities in north and south been duly represented. "In the states of the south when rebellion was plotted, and when open steps were taken to break the Union . . . it (minority representation) would have held the Union men of those states together and have given them voice in the electoral colleges." Let Unionists, Liberals, and Labour men have in all the component states of the Federal Union their just and proportionate share of representation; there will then be no excuse for the idea that Ireland contains no sober and responsible citizens, or that Scotland and Wales have hardly any Unionists, but the federated communities will see, each in the other, similar parties dealing with similar problems.

Ireland and Proportional Representation.

It is to be hoped that in the work of preparing the new constitutions for the component states of the new Federation it may be possible, if a constituent convention is impossible, to allow a wider latitude to, and invite a wider responsibility from, the Opposition (whichever party may be in opposition) than is usually the case in connection with a government bill. In any event the question of the electoral system should not be overlooked, and more care should be bestowed on it than was apparent in the preparation of the Home Rule Bill. That bill, as introduced, contained no provision for proportional representation at all. The Irish Senate was to be nominated. There were some large constituencies prescribed for the Irish House of Commons—Belfast East, 5 members; Belfast North and Cork City, 4 members; Belfast South, Dublin (College Green), Dublin (Harbour), Dublin (St Patrick's), Dublin County North, and Dublin County South, each 3 members; giving a total of 31 out of 164 members of the Irish House of Commons. But there was not a word in the bill to indicate what method of election was to be applied. It seemed even possible that the unrepealed Reform Act of 1867 might apply in such a manner

as to reintroduce the limited vote in the three-cornered constituencies. In these conditions the Irish Proportional Representation Society came into being. It is significant and hopeful that this is perhaps the only Irish political movement in which Irishmen of all religious and political opinions have taken part. The Society brought home to the attention of the Government the importance of the Irish electoral question, and their pressure succeeded in obtaining two notable concessions; first, the House of Commons, on the motion of the Government, passed unanimously an amendment providing that, subject to the nomination of the Senate for the first term of its existence, the Senate should be elected by the four provinces voting as four large constituencies[1] and returning: Ulster 14, Leinster 11, Munster 9, and Connaught 6 members; and a little later in the history of the bill, the Government accepted an amendment which was carried by 311 votes to 81, introducing proportional representation for the constituencies returning three or more members to the Irish House of Commons.

It may be that this chapter of our electoral history is not at an end. No country needs a just system of representation more than Ireland. To reconcile all Irishmen to their new institutions is the paramount object of statesmanship. To give freedom to every new aspiration, to allow every new idea to come freely to the light, to exile or proscribe no man, to make an Irish legislative assembly—or assemblies—that shall be open to all Irishmen, is at least a method that gives hope. It is of vital importance that in the future the old divisions of Irishmen shall not be continued indefinitely and that a solid Protestant North East shall not for ever confront a solid Catholic Rest of Ireland. The old divisions, no longer corresponding to the real issues and conflicts of modern life, must disappear. In Belgium before proportional representation was introduced, solidly Catholic Flemish provinces confronted Walloon districts that were solidly Socialist or Liberal; when proportional representation came, it revealed to the Flemings the fact that there were Catholics

[1] These constituencies are of very formidable and indeed unnecessary size. It ought to be possible, without injustice, to subdivide Ulster and perhaps Leinster into two constituencies each.

in Liège, and to the Walloons that there were Liberals in Flanders; the lines of political division were found not to be the provincial frontiers, and the unity of the Belgian nation profited by the discovery. So should it be in Ireland. It is plain enough that Ireland under Home Rule will have her share of the economic struggle. The differences between the Catholic employer of Dublin and the Protestant employer of Belfast will tend to disappear—and they will disappear the more rapidly the less the electoral system perpetuates the idea that Belfast is all Orange and Dublin all Green. The country districts and the towns will have their separate interests. An Irish parliament should not be overwhelmingly rural in character if the towns are to have their interests fairly regarded. If the question is asked[1] why proportional representation is a good thing in Belfast, Dublin, and Cork, and the old majority system a good thing everywhere else, what answer can be given? or, rather, what answer that will satisfy an Irish Labour party which, on majority principles, would be strong enough to carry the greater part of the seats in the large towns (as the Social Democrats in Germany carry Berlin and Hamburg), but is told that while it must give justice to the urban minorities whom it could extinguish, yet, when its own supporters are themselves minorities, they deserve no consideration? A similar proposal in Belgium—to apply proportional representation in the town, and not in the country districts—was rejected with emphasis. If full justice is to be done, the application of proportional representation should be complete.

Scotland and Wales.

But if Ireland is to have proportional representation partly in order to meet the possibilities of the future, the conditions of the present impose proportional representation as a necessity for parliamentary assemblies in Scotland and Wales. In Scotland at the last general election there were, roughly, four Ministerialist voters to three Unionist (372,313 to 277,183); but the Ministerialists got sixty-one seats and the Unionists eleven. A Scottish parliament cannot be made in this way. In Wales (including Monmouth) in 1906 not a single Unionist was returned—though

[1] Mr Larkin asked the question at the Albert Hall, in November 1913. No answer was offered.

100,547 Unionist votes were cast. In December 1910 in all Wales and Monmouth there were 121,013 Unionist votes to 210,525 Ministerialist; 3 Unionists and 31 Ministerialists were returned to Parliament. To set up a Welsh parliament in these conditions would be a mockery.[1]

England.

But if Ireland, Scotland, and Wales all have their parliaments thus elected, England can hardly differ, and if the subordinate parliaments are elected by proportional representation, the central parliament elected on a majority system will be felt to be an anomaly.

Second Chambers.

The constitution of the popular chambers of a new federal union cannot be considered apart from that of the second chambers. Will the new federal constitution be bicameral? If the Irish precedent is followed—yes. And if yes, how will the second chamber differ from the first? If the Irish precedent is followed, in being more truly representative of the electors. For the same electors will elect both Houses, if the Irish precedent is followed, but the first chamber will be elected mainly on the majority system, and the second on the proportional. If there is a conflict will not the second chamber be the stronger morally, even though it be smaller in size? But in Scotland and Wales, as we have seen, the first chamber must be elected proportionally, if justice is to be done to the conservative classes. How then will their second chambers be chosen so as to be differentiated from the first? For if the second be not different from the first, what reason could be given for its existence?

There is no doubt a widespread idea that proportional

[1] If any reader is inclined to believe that the evils of the present system, so far as the mathematical correctness of results is concerned, would be palliated by redistribution, he may be referred to the calculations of Mr J. Rooke Corbett, of the Manchester Statistical Society, republished in Mr John H. Humphreys' *Proportional Representation*, Methuen, London, 1911. Mr Corbett shows clearly that the actual results in the general elections from 1885 to 1910 would have been affected very slightly by a redistribution into equal constituencies. In 1886, 1906, and December 1910 the majorities would have been slightly smaller, and in the other cases slightly larger. But the differences are small.

representation is specially suitable for a second chamber. The Irish Home Rule Bill has strengthened this belief, and it appears likely to be acted upon in New Zealand. This view has been confirmed by the report of the majority of the Members of the Royal Commission on Electoral Systems, who, while unable to report that a case had been made out before them for the adoption of the single transferable vote "here and now" for the House of Commons, added that "there would be much to be said in its favour as a method for the constitution of a second chamber."[1] Unfortunately, this latter observation was not elaborated by the Commission. Hence, we do not know what in their view is the function of a second as distinct from a first chamber (both being popularly elected legislative bodies), and why, consequently, an accurate system of representation is appropriate to the one even if it be inappropriate to the other. Perhaps the Commissioners would draw a distinction between a body which has to maintain a government in power and one which, according to recent British practice, need not be in harmony with the government. But the lack of harmony between a second

[1] It may be pointed out that on this point the majority of the Commission plainly travelled beyond the terms of their reference. They were appointed "to examine the various schemes which have been adopted or proposed in order to secure a fully representative character for popularly elected legislative bodies, and to consider whether and how far they or any of them are *capable* of application in this country in regard to the existing electorate." The Commission were not asked to say whether politically proportional representation was desirable or not, but (*a*) to examine the mechanism of proportional representation schemes, and (*b*) to report on whether and how far application in this country was *possible*. The question whether proportional representation is politically desirable or not is one for Parliament and the electorate, not for a Royal Commission. In this connection the late Lord Lochee's (Mr Edmund Robertson) dissentient note is unanswerable. Lord Lochee said: "I regret to find myself unable to concur with my colleagues in their conclusions respecting the Transferable Vote. In my opinion it has been amply proved that this method of voting is a practicable scheme for securing to elected legislative bodies a more fully representative character. It is only one of various schemes, having that purpose, which we have examined. Many of these have merits of their own—I would refer more particularly to the Belgian system—but I thing the Transferable Vote is the simplest and the best. I can see no reason for holding that it is not applicable to our existing

chamber and a government which may be negligible when the second chamber is hereditary, may soon become important when the second chamber is popularly elected. It is difficult to suppose that a second chamber popularly elected on a proportional principle will be in its constitutional effects the equivalent of the present House of Lords. Two legislative chambers of different origin are inevitably rivals for influence and power, and in a democratic community the chamber which is in most real and vital connection with popular feeling is likely in the long run to prove the stronger even if it be the smaller body. Before we can answer the question, how ought a second chamber to be elected, we must first ask, what the second chamber is wanted to do. An enquiry of this kind would take us beyond the limits of this pamphlet. But this, at any rate, we may say with safety—that a second chamber must be different from the first in its functions, and therefore it ought to be different in the method of its constitution. It is not a hopeful project to let the same body of electors choose two representative assemblies, one by imperfect methods and the other on more rational principles, and to expect the latter in the long run to be subordinate to the former.

electorate. I am constrained, therefore, by the terms of our reference, to report in its favour.

"The truth seems to be that the most formidable objections to the Transferable Vote would apply to any scheme of proportional representation. They are arguments against the whole idea of proportional representation. In my judgment they strike at the principle, which, for the purposes of this Commission, must be assumed, viz. : that elected legislatures should have as fully representative a character as possible.

"Under our present system a minority of electors may seat a majority of legislators. A small minority may elect a large minority. Considerable sections of the electorate may have no representation at all. It is impossible to say that such a system has a fully representative character, or to deny that the Transferable Vote would remove or greatly modify its defects.

"I am not concerned to dispute that the introduction of proportional representation might involve important changes in parliamentary government. That, in my view, is not a question for the Commission. I shall therefore only say that I do not believe that the cause of good government is bound up with the maintenance of a distorted representation, or that British statesmanship would be unable to cope with the problems which a better system might bring in its train."

Hence, those politicians who care for the predominance of the Commons should be careful lest they set up rival Houses either in the shape of a federal second chamber, or of second chambers in the component parts of the Federal Union, which naturally will be looked upon with some favour by the former partisans of the House of Lords, and which will have a far more plausible title to popular support. In the case of the old House of Lords, the appearance did not correspond to the reality. It appeared to be a mere assembly of magnates without popular support, but in reality it represented the whole Unionist party or very little less than one-half of the electorate of the United Kingdom. It was this that gave it its political strength—a strength that but for the action of the Unionist leaders would have made Liberal legislation impossible for the present generation; and yet at the same time, this strength had in it the weakness that the House of Lords was involved in the electoral fortunes and misfortunes of the Unionists, and that it never could have the authority to which a body of a less uniform party colour might attain. If a new second chamber be set up that represents the whole people, its opposition to the Commons—if ever it does oppose—will be more formidable than that of the old House of Lords. And if it be answered that its opposition is unthinkable, as both Houses will proceed from the same electorate, the reply is that we have no security that the lower House if elected on present principles will represent the electorate accurately, and that assemblies have a habit of developing a corporate spirit of their own. A Liberal may, perhaps, be allowed to think that it would be a disaster to the continuity of our constitution if the Commons on the morrow of their victory should be defeated by another body with a higher claim to popular confidence. The true remedy is a fully representative House of Commons. With such a House in full control, another chamber could well be constituted in such a manner as to include elements which no popular election could supply, and to this chamber subordinate functions of discussion, of revision, and delay could be granted without impairing the supremacy of the Commons.[1]

[1] As good a solution as any other of the problem would be probably

In any case, once the function of a second chamber is determined, and once it is granted that the second chamber is to be in some sense representative of different classes and interests, there will be a general agreement that the representation should be as full and complete as possible, and that the various limiting considerations which have been thought to make a full representation inappropriate to a governing assembly have no place when a second chamber is under discussion.

Municipal Elections.

It will hardly be disputed in any quarter that the present system of electing local authorities is far from perfect. The Royal Commission on Electoral Systems has intimated that the municipal field is appropriate for proportional representation. The House of Commons[1] has resolved unanimously that under the present system grave anomalies and injustices result, and that it is expedient to empower municipal boroughs to apply the proportional system in the election of their councils. A bill (the Municipal Representation Bill) carrying this resolution into effect has, indeed, been introduced and reintroduced into the House of Commons; has been introduced into the House of Lords, and examined and favourably reported on by a select committee of that assembly; on one occasion it passed through all its stages in the House of Lords, and was sent down to the Commons. Unfortunately,

the election of each second chamber on proportional principles by the House of Commons itself—English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, or Federal, as the case might be—not more than one-half of the Chamber being chosen at a time; the election to take place immediately after the election of a new House of Commons. The Upper House would then represent both the present and past mood of the national mind, while the House of Commons represented the present mood only. It would be the duty of the Cabinet to see that the claims of those elements of experienced State service, for whose presence politicians have usually been inclined to turn to nomination, should be adequately considered by their supporters in the Commons. The election of an upper chamber, even partially, by municipal and county councils is to be deprecated. It is no part of the functions of a local administration to choose a senator, and if such a task is given to county councillors their own elections will be rendered even more political than they are at present.

[1] Resolution of 30th March 1910.

being a private member's bill, it has got no further. The fortune of the ballot has not been with it, and up to now its main service has been to provide another example of the ill-contrived arrangements under which our Parliament does its work.

The anomalies of the present system of the constitution of municipal councils may be illustrated by the following results of the last (1912) elections to the metropolitan borough councils :—

Borough.	Total Seats.	Uncontested Seats.*	Contested Seats obtained by			
			Municipal Reform.	Progressive.	Labour and Socialist.	Independent.
Chelsea . . .	36	15	36	...	...	...
Finsbury . . .	54	21	48	5	1	...
Fulham . . .	36	6	36	...	...	...
Hammersmith . .	36	...	31	...	...	5
Islington . . .	60	...	53	6	1	...
Kensington . .	60	30	52	2	6	...
Lambeth . . .	60	...	56	2	2	...
Lewisham . .	42	...	42	...	...	...
St Marylebone .	60	15	53	7	...	...
Wandsworth . .	60	18	57	...	...	3
Westminster . .	60	42	60	...	...	...

* These uncontested seats, the numbers of which are eloquent of the apathy caused by the present electoral system, with the exception of three in Finsbury, are all held by the Municipal Reform party.

As examples of the details of the contests in particular wards, the following figures may be cited :—

St Pancras, No. 1 Ward.

Municipal Reform.		Progressive.		Labour and Socialist.	
Candidate.	Votes.	Candidate.	Votes.	Candidate.	Votes.
Solomon .	1,670	M'Cormack .	1,269	Jarrett .	650
Coggan . .	1,667	Chamberlain	1,260	Carter .	623
Mitchell . .	1,645	Collin . .	1,225	Holyoake .	501
Fincham .	1,643	Cussen . .	1,178	Watson .	455
Caunt . .	1,617	Gilsen . .	1,172	Woodley .	450
Hughes . .	1,609	Walker . .	1,170	Lewington .	426
Liddelow .	1,604	Younger .	1,149	Redhouse .	421
Matthews .	1,554	Ramsden .	1,134	Strong .	421
Jennens .	1,410	Perryman .	1,131	Rose . .	410
Total Municipal Reform	14,419	Total Progressive	10,688	Total Labour and Socialist	4357

Result : Nine Municipal Reformers elected ; no Progressives and no Labour or Socialist candidate.

Lambeth, No. 3 Ward.

Municipal Reform.		Progressive.	
Candidate.	Votes.	Candidate.	Votes.
Budge . . .	1,496	Brittain . . .	1,345
Arter	1,473	Chesworth . . .	1,298
Clancy . . .	1,465	Blyton . . .	1,282
Brown . . .	1,435	Clark	1,233
Capon . . .	1,424	Johnson . . .	1,204
M'Keith . . .	1,388	Jewell . . .	1,196
Day	1,383	Heath . . .	1,175
Hawes . . .	1,381	Crowe . . .	1,164
Dowdall . . .	1,372	Crane	1,152
Total Municipal Reform	12,817	Total Progressive .	11,049

Result: Nine Municipal Reformers elected and no Progressives.

These figures are given not so much to show the injustice as between parties that is caused by our present system—striking though it be—as to suggest some more general reflections. What these figures mean is that no man, whatever his character or abilities and fitness for municipal work, is allowed a seat on a municipal body unless his political opinions happen to agree with those of the majority of his neighbours. And, as men cannot usually take part in any municipal life except that of their own locality, a man who is not sure of a local majority is excluded from municipal life altogether. It is not always remembered by those who call for social service that one of the most useful social services (and to an honest man one of the most thankless) is barred to all those who are not willing to sign a formula of allegiance to a political creed.

In many districts of London, the local borough council is to the Progressives what the universities before the Test Acts were to the Nonconformist. In other districts the same thing is true, with a change in the name of the party excluded. No sane person could justify this exclusion.

Thus, municipal service (which in any case is not as attractive as parliamentary service to a man of talent and ambition) is a close preserve, when the political majority on the one side or other is stable. When it is not stable,

the evil is of another kind—a premium is put on inexperience. Now, municipal work, even more than parliamentary work, is largely a matter of experience and knowledge of detail. A knowledge of principles, breadth of mind, eloquence and skill in debate, are of less value comparatively in municipal than in parliamentary work. A good municipal councillor must know his work and know it thoroughly. If he does not so know it, he is a mere cypher, helpless in the hands of the permanent officials. To know municipal work takes time. A batch of newly elected councillors are of very little use. But our present system in a district where the balance of parties is nearly even gives a councillor no security of tenure; the metropolitan plan of total replacement every third year is worse in this respect than the provincial plan of the election of one-third of the council every year, but both are bad. Now, security of tenure apart from the will of the electors is not to be sought for or expected. All that is asked from an electoral system—and all that is secured by a proportional system—is that if a councillor's quota of electors remain faithful, he is assured of his place. A change of view on the part of the balancing electors entitles those electors who change to dismiss their own representative; it does not entitle them to do what the present system allows—to dismiss the representative of other electors.

Under present conditions, when so large a part of municipal work is the conduct of undertakings which have to be managed with some continuity of direction, the need for keeping the *personnel* of our municipal councils as stable as the electorate—neither more nor less—is specially urgent. Excess in one direction, followed by reaction in another, is fatal in business management.

OBJECTIONS

THE main objections to the *machinery* of the single transferable vote (the effect of "late preferences" and the difficulty of by-elections) have been dealt with already.[1] We may pass from objections as to machinery to objections of principle. Men of eminence have made objections to the application of proportional representation in any form to a legislative body. They tell us that proportional representation will give such small majorities that under it no government could live. They say that proportional representation will destroy the party system and give us a system of groups, and that immoral bargains will be transferred from the constituencies to the House of Commons. Some think that proportional representation will increase the grip of party, and give more power to party managers. Others fear that proportional representation will weaken the personal and human tie between a member and his constituents, and that it will destroy the democratic control of Parliament; and, lastly, it is objected that the cost of elections under proportional representation will be prohibitive to the poorer parties. It is time to consider these objections.

Small Majorities.

As to small majorities, it is no doubt true that we shall have smaller majorities than those to which we are accustomed on the present system. The following table shows the actual majorities obtained in all British general elections since 1886, compared with the majorities that would have resulted on a perfectly proportional[2] basis:—

[1] See pages 46 to 50.

[2] It must be remembered that these are the figures of the absolutely proportional results that would follow if the whole kingdom were one constituency. It is probable that on a division into constituencies of an average of from five to six members—as proposed in the Proportional Representation Bill—rather larger majorities would result.

GENERAL ELECTIONS.—1885-1910.

Results under Single-Member Constituencies, and under Proportional Representation.

Year of Election.	Majority under	Great Britain.	Ireland.	United Kingdom.
1885*	Present System . . .	Lib. 91	Lib. 67	Lib. 158
	Proportional Representation .	Lib. 41	Lib. 51	Lib. 92
1886	Present System . . .	Con. 169	Lib. 65	Con. 104
	Proportional Representation .	Con. 27	Lib. 45	Lib. 18
1892	Present System . . .	Con. 13	Lib. 57	Lib. 44
	Proportional Representation .	Lib. 1	Lib. 39	Lib. 40
1895	Present System . . .	Con. 211	Lib. 61	Con. 150
	Proportional Representation .	Con. 37	Lib. 35	Con. 2
1900	Present System . . .	Con. 195	Lib. 61	Con. 134
	Proportional Representation .	Con. 41	Lib. 39	Con. 2
1906	Present System . . .	Lib. 289	Lib. 67	Lib. 356
	Proportional Representation .	Lib. 77	Lib. 37	Lib. 114
1910 Jan.	Present System . . .	Lib. 63	Lib. 61	Lib. 124
	Proportional Representation .	Lib. 28	Lib. 26	Lib. 54
1910 Dec.	Present System . . .	Lib. 61	Lib. 65	Lib. 126
	Proportional Representation .	Lib. 14	Lib. 24	Lib. 38

* The figures in this table for elections prior to January 1910 were accepted by the Royal Commission on Electoral Systems as "probably representing the truth as nearly as circumstances will permit." All the figures are the work of Mr J. Rooke Corbett, of the Manchester Statistical Society. The old names of "Liberal," as representing the party of the present (1914) Government and its allies, and "Conservative," as representing its opponents, have been preserved.

It will be seen that in the case of 1886 a minority of votes actually returned a majority of members: it is surely one of the ironies of history that if Mr Gladstone had in 1885 accepted a system of election to which he was opposed, he would in 1886 have carried the Home Rule Bill on which he staked his career. But this is by the way. No doubt, of late years the practice of the House of Commons has come to require a good "working" majority. But the present system does not secure it. In 1892 it gave a smaller majority than the proportional representation system would have given in 1906 or in January 1910,[1] when the Ministerial majorities

[1] It is never quite satisfactory to argue from the figures of the present system to the probable majorities under proportional representation. The new conditions might produce a rather greater freedom in the elector, so that if there were a general feeling in favour of a party, the transfer of votes might be greater than in present conditions.

would have been 114 and 54. In other countries majority systems have often produced an evenly balanced assembly. The following was the result of the Australian Federal Elections of May 1913:—

	Votes.			Seats.		
Total.	Ministerial.	Opposition.	Independent.	Ministerial.	Opposition.	Independent.
Contested Seats	928,419	930,076	41,874	35	37	...
Uncontested Seats	...	...	...	2	1	...
Total Seats	...	...	...	37	38	...

If we rely on the present system for large working majorities, we depend on a broken reed.

Are Large Majorities necessary?

But are large majorities a real necessity for the House of Commons? They were not always thought so. In the middle of the nineteenth century governments thought themselves very comfortable with majorities of 50 and less. Indeed, it is clear that the size of a majority is not *by itself* any added advantage; what a government wants on a division is to carry its proposals; it wants therefore a majority, not a majority of any special size (we are not now considering the case of a great drop in a government's normal majority on an important division—a drop which may indicate that the confidence of the House is being withdrawn—but only, as a matter of parliamentary mechanics, what it is that a government wants). True it is that it is a great advantage to have as it were a reserve of power for an emergency; but what is *necessary* is to have enough power to climb the obstacles that have to be overcome. And the real solution is to diminish the number of occasions on which these necessary calls for power have to be made. In other words, do not let every division in the House of Commons be a potential crisis. Let it be understood that a government will not consider the question of resignation after a hostile

vote on a minor occasion, if it can rely on rallying to its support a majority in the House that is approximately the number of its known supporters on all important occasions—second and third readings, hostile amendments to the address, budget resolutions, serious amendments in committee, and, most of all, formal votes of confidence. And let the House of Commons so reform its procedure that decisions of minor importance can be reversed easily, if necessary. With these not very revolutionary changes the imagined necessity for a continuous large majority fades away. If "snap divisions" neither turn out nor seriously embarrass a government, their attraction will disappear, to the no small advantage of the dignity of the House of Commons. We must not assume that the present conditions of parliamentary business are eternal, any more than that they are the best possible, nor will an assembly elected on a proportional system deem itself bound by all the conventions of a different body. "I do not believe," said Lord Lochee,[1] "that the cause of good government is bound up with the maintenance of a distorted representation, or that British statesmanship would be unable to cope with the problems which a better system might bring in its train."

Increase of Parliamentary Freedom.

The diminished importance of the snap division would not be the only change which a system of smaller majorities would bring about. There would be other changes, that can be forecast, at least in outline. The Cabinet would be less autocratic. It would have to ride the House more lightly. It would lose something of its solidarity. It could not afford to stake its existence on the defence of a minister who had lost the confidence of the House. The House could withdraw a confidence that it no longer felt without thereby destroying a government. And the unofficial member of parliament would be less amenable to pressure from the Whips. The consequences of independence on his part would not be so dire. A general election would not have the same terrors. A member of parliament firmly seated in a large

[1] In his note to the Report of the Royal Commission on Electoral Systems, page 37. See above, page 56.

constituency, with a solid quota of reliable voters behind him, would be a different man and a better representative than a man sitting by the favour of a few balancing voters, or possibly, if the alternative vote or second ballot be introduced, by the favour of political opponents.

It may, indeed, be doubted whether, apart from the mechanical question of the management of the business of the House of Commons, a majority in members largely in excess of the real majority in votes is a source of strength to the government. It is apt to produce over-confidence in the Cabinet and slackness in the House of Commons. Governments are not, as a rule, anxious to hear speeches from their unofficial supporters. Hence a large majority means the muzzling of a larger portion of the House. A large majority has no greater power of overcoming obstruction than a small majority: it was the tiny minorities of the Irish Nationalists and the Fourth Party that reduced the Liberal government of 1880 to 1885, with its three-figure majority, very nearly to impotence. It does not need 250 or 300 members to take advantage of all the opportunities of parliamentary procedure: 25 or 30 men will do quite as well and better than a larger number. And an exaggerated majority, once the first flush of victory is over, is apt to suffer from a consciousness of its exaggeration. The size of the Liberal majority of 1906 to 1910 was no advantage to Liberal policy.

Effect on Party System.

The effect of a reformed method of representation on the British party system is very difficult to foresee; experience alone can decide the question. There is, however, no point on which both the friends and enemies of reform speak with greater confidence. The discussion is not assisted by the uncertainty of the terms used: for instance, the existing system is often called the Two-party system. We need not quarrel with the phrase, but, obviously, if we have only two parties, the Irish Nationalists and the Labour party are only "groups," and our present system is partly a group system already. Again, how does a "party" differ from a "group"? Is it a mere question of size? A possible distinction would be that a party is a body of politicians capable of forming a

government from its own ranks, while a group is a body that can only support or oppose, or possibly contribute to the formation of, a government. But this definition would hardly agree with common usage. A better solution is perhaps to give the name of party to those political bodies which have a distinct extra-parliamentary organisation, while keeping the word "group" for bodies which exist only within parliament itself.

Again, the discussion has been obscured by the literal translation of the political terms of a foreign language, especially French. French supporters of proportional representation ask for and expect from the reform an increase of the *esprit de parti*, and a development of party organisation; but in so doing they are not asking for, or expecting, an increase of the strength of the machinery of party as known in Great Britain and in the United States. They are seeking a simplification of politics and the substitution of a conflict of principles and ideas for a barren struggle of personalities. But some of their expressions, if translated incautiously and transferred from French to British conditions, may easily mislead an enquirer. It should never be forgotten that no one word in one language (with the exception of a few modern scientific terms) is an exact equivalent for one word in another.[1]

Parties and Groups.

Now it is plain that in all parliaments there will in modern conditions be both parties and groups. Men naturally associate and co-operate with those whose main aims are the same as their own, and they have specially intimate relations with those who agree with their views on some one subject of importance. This is true of all parliaments, however they may have been elected. At the present time, the British, French, Italian, and German parliaments are all elected on the majority system. But they differ widely in their organisation of parties. In France, Italy, and Germany there are more parties than with us—so many that we are accustomed to consider that the French, Italian, and German Chambers are constituted rather on a system of groups than

[1] "The same things uttered in Hebrew and translated into another tongue have not the same force in them."

on parties as we understand them. But this is not the result of proportional representation.

It might be tempting to spin a theory that a true party system, or something very near it, is the natural form of a parliament that has not only to legislate but also to supervise administration. It might be thought that the necessity for ensuring that "the King's Government be carried on" would be a reason why the parliamentary assembly should be divided into two divisions only, from either of which an administration could be formed at need with either the certainty or the hope of obtaining a majority in the assembly. On the other hand, in a body such as the Reichstag, whose control over the administration is not yet developed, the necessity for two parties might not be imperative. And if we look at Germany and England alone this difference of the function of the parliament seems an adequate explanation of the difference of organisation. Unluckily for the theory, we have in France a parliamentary assembly which controls administration as well as legislation, but yet is divided into groups. The suggestion has been made that the second ballot is not unconnected with the group system. It is certainly worth observing that in Germany the Liberal and Radical parties are almost entirely returned at the second ballot (of 90 Liberal and Radical members of the Reichstag, only 4 were elected at the first ballot in 1912), and owe their seats in some cases to Conservative or "Centre," and in some cases to Socialist support. It is hard to see how a party can be homogeneous in such conditions, and the German Liberals and Radicals are in fact hopelessly disunited and therefore ineffective. A similar fate may await the British Liberal and Radical party under similar conditions of election.

But indeed it is plain that there is no one single cause for the difference between a two-party parliament and a group parliament. Differences of history and of national character have much to account for. The fact that in France until recently a large body of the Chamber had to be reckoned as hostile to the existing form of government may have been not without importance. For the result was that one "party" alone—the Republican party—could furnish

alternative ministries, and so the competition for office was rather within that "party" than between that "party" and rival parties, and the "party" split into groups.

It has been thought that the introduction of proportional representation will destroy parties because "a Prohibitionist candidate might well be elected on the Prohibitionist platform alone,"[1] and thus we should have "detached groups which have no mandate and which appeal to the country as though they were to be absolutely separate in their parliamentary action." This theory seems improbable in itself and is not supported by experience. It is improbable because in existing conditions it would be impossible for a candidate to appeal to an electorate at a general election without declaring his views on the main questions of the day. He might attach special importance to some special question, but he could not avoid questions of pressing political interest. It is unthinkable that a temperance candidate could have stood in 1910 and not told his electors on which side he meant to vote in a division on the Parliament Bill.

Belgian and Tasmanian Experience.

Belgian experience is against the theory and, indeed, points rather to a consolidation of groups into parties under proportional representation. The three great Belgian parties—Catholic, Liberal, and Socialist—seem to have strengthened themselves under proportional representation rather than disintegrated. But it must be remembered that the Belgian system of proportional representation is a list system. Tasmanian experience also does not support the group theory. In Tasmania, as elsewhere in Australasia, a politician is either Labour or anti-Labour, and these capital divisions survive whatever the system of representation. But it may be admitted frankly that the Tasmanian House of Assembly is so small (30 members only) that too much stress must not be laid on inferences from Tasmania to Great Britain. From Sweden, Finland, and the Swiss proportionalist cantons we have no evidence that the party system as in force at the introduction of proportional representation has been destroyed by it.

[1] J. Ramsay MacDonald, M.P., *The Labour Party and Electoral Reform*, Labour Party Office, 28 Victoria Street, London, S.W.

It must, however, be said that sometimes advocates of proportional representation, who are also inclined to attribute existing evils to the party system, have made claims for proportional representation which have been almost revolutionary. The power which a constituency will have with the single transferable vote of electing men of national importance whose allegiance to any of the great parties may be comparatively loose, is an essential advantage of the system. We may hope that it will be exercised not too sparingly and that it will greatly strengthen the House of Commons and enhance its reputation. But the idea that we shall substitute for our present members of parliament — who, whatever their defects, or perhaps because of their defects, are strikingly like the rest of us—670 sublimely efficient supermen, is wholly illusory. The British party system is a natural (if that much-abused word may be permitted) growth of parliament in the sense that it was never imposed by any force external to parliament; it is subject to the changes and development of a natural growth. Of late years party discipline has grown more rigid: an independent body like the Peelites[1] is an impossibility in present conditions; but, on the other hand, the arrival of a third party has at least offered a choice of three instead of two creeds.

Men of National Importance.

The most striking defects of the existing party system are: (1) that on any subject of importance legislation is impossible which is not supported by one or other of the two great parties; *e.g.*, women's suffrage will not be carried unless and until it is adopted by a Unionist or a Liberal administration; and (2) that parties exact too strict a conformity to all articles of their creeds. Unionist associations will not take candidates who differ from the standard of orthodoxy for the time being on the Tariff question. On both these points proportional representation would tend to improve existing conditions. It would give electors the choice between, say, suffragist and anti-suffragist candidates of their own party, and so in effect put before

[1] Those who are inclined too readily to denounce "groups" should not forget the striking national services rendered by this the most talented group of parliamentarians of the nineteenth century.

the electorate other questions besides those on which the two main parties differed. Members of parliament being elected by quotas instead of uncertain majorities, would be better able to defy an attack on their seats by a member of their own party. The "split vote" would lose its terrors. They could thus more freely combine for special purposes outside party ties. Further, at election times the party organisers would be anxious to attract as much support as possible and would not ostracise the more independent-minded candidates. It would be better for two wings of a party to co-operate, and they would have every temptation to do so. A party would not have to struggle for a single seat in each constituency under the standard of a single man.

If the general frame of the party system thus remains, the danger of "immoral bargains" between groups in the House of Commons need not detain us. Indeed, the prophecy of this evil result is founded on the fallacy that groups of faddists will be returned without a mandate on general questions of importance. If and when this happens, if and when the British people at a general election are so weak that they do not insist on knowing what line a candidate will take on a vital matter, we may safely say that the British people is unfit not merely for proportional representation, but for self-government in any form. At bottom, this distrust of the results of proportional representation in producing an incompetent House of Commons is a distrust of democracy. If democracy faithfully mirrored cannot produce a satisfactory representative assembly, we had better seek some other form of government.

Immoral Bargains.

The question of the referendum naturally occurs to the mind at this point, though it cannot be debated here. It may be enough to say that there is nothing incompatible between the referendum and proportional representation; in fact, both are often advocated together. The one is a method of checking the representative assembly, the other a method of reforming it. It is probable that with proportional representation the need of a referendum would be less felt; but the existence of proportional representation would be no obstacle to its

Referendum.

application. But the referendum would certainly involve a violent, and even a revolutionary, change from our existing parliamentary practice—a far greater change than proportional representation; a House of Commons which had passed a bill subsequently defeated on referendum would have lost its claim to be representative of the people, and could hardly escape a dissolution.

The Caucus and Proportional Representation.

The statement that proportional representation would strengthen the hands of the party managers is made as a rule by two classes of critics—first, those who are unwilling to take the pains to examine the details of the system, and have a general idea that advocates of proportional representation are amiable amateurs, whereas the "party manager" is an expert; and, second, those who consider that the larger lists of candidates' names which must appear on the ballot paper will give an advantage to the "yellow dog" or undesirable, unknown candidate put forward by the party "machine." To the first class of critics it is perhaps enough to say—"come and see"; any serious study of the system of the single transferable vote must convince an enquirer that the position of the candidate who has a quota of voters behind him is absolutely secure from any manœuvre, short of "stuffing" the ballot boxes, that the most astute party manager could contrive. The second class of critics may be reminded that under proportional representation it will be the reverse of an advantage for party managers to run as candidates men with little or no talent or reputation; such men will be a mere tax on the voting strength of the party; passengers in the boat, they will not aid her speed. And, whereas under the single-member system, at the present time, the party manager can say, "vote for my yellow dog, or for the other side," under proportional representation the voter can always omit the yellow dog from the list of preferences that he makes. But perhaps a more convincing argument against the view that proportional representation will help the party manager is that the opinion of the "machine man" has always and everywhere been unfavourable to the reform. We need not suppose that the instinctive liking for what promotes life and dislike

for what injures it, which has aided the evolution of all forms of living organisms high and low, has no operation in the case of party managers. But perhaps we need not seek so deep for a cause of the ordinary antagonism of the "machine." The trouble of having to learn new methods of business is always a cause of professional opposition to reform. If a man has learnt one system thoroughly, and makes his living by it, it is only human to resent having to master another. An observer of the learned professions can easily illustrate this truth from his own experience.

Another objection is that proportional representation, by creating large constituencies, will destroy the human interest in politics, and weaken the personal touch between member and constituent. The reverse is surely the truth. At present a member of parliament who seriously tries to carry into effect the principles he was elected to support, must be in a relation of political hostility to his opponents in his constituency. There can be no real personal touch between them. On the other hand, on a proportional system a man represents those who elect him, and may be expected to be in far closer personal touch with those with whom he is in sympathy. The size of the constituency in this connection is of small importance; each member will have a very fair knowledge who his supporters are, and he will not be expected to exchange unmeaning civilities with opponents. And, at the same time, he will be more truly under democratic control, for he will be liable to dismissal by his own electors, and not, as now, by a small percentage of those who voted for him and now transfer their support to an opponent. The system of the second ballot or the alternative vote, on the other hand, is really the negation of democratic control. For it involves the election of the representative by the support of those with whom his true relation is one of difference, if not of hostility, and who by withdrawing their support deprive another section of the democracy of representation, without, however, gaining for themselves a true representative in exchange.

The Personal Tie.

Democratic Control.

There remains the question of expense. Here, again, critics of the proportional system fail to realise the new

conditions. It is easy to say that constituencies three times, seven times, or ten times as large as the present electoral areas must mean three, seven, or ten times the present expense to a candidate, and hence to infer that the present expense to a party will be multiplied by three, seven, or ten. It is forgotten that, instead of two or three candidates for every seat — one from each party—each issuing his own election address and fighting separately his own battle, in the future each party need only put into the field one or two more candidates than the seats in the large constituencies which it expects to win, and, further, that the two, three, or four candidates of a party will fight together and share expenses. Hence in a seven-membered constituency on ground unfavourable to Labour and contested by Unionist, Liberal, and Labour candidates, if the Unionists hope to win four seats they need not have more than four or five candidates in all, the Liberals, hoping to win three seats, can be content with four candidates, and the Labour party, hoping to win one seat, need have only one candidate, so that the total of candidates will be ten; whereas under the old system the seven seats would have needed at least fourteen candidates of the older parties, and probably two Labour candidates as well—making a total of sixteen. Thus, under the new conditions, instead of sixteen separate candidatures we should have ten candidatures in three groups. On this showing, the total amount spent out of the party funds (which to a poor party is what most matters) will be considerably less than at present. And in most cases the expenses of each individual candidate, even of the man who stands independent of party, will be lower. The returning officers' expenses (if they are still borne by the candidates), though higher in themselves (owing to the increase of area and consequent increase of polling stations), will be divided among many more candidates, and the candidates of the same party will share their common expenses of postage, printing, and election agent. And, lastly, a candidate of national or even local importance who can rely on getting his quota, and who stands either independently of party or as the sole representative of a party, will be able to count on his quota without all the

Expense.

desperate placard and bazaar expenditure that is now lavished on securing the vote of the indifferent elector. The stalwarts of a party cost nothing to poll; the less valuable intellectually and morally is a vote, the more expensive is it to the candidate. In many constituencies a party or a candidate that is not rich, but that can rely on polling one or two quotas of convinced supporters, will find that under the new conditions an election is sensibly cheaper than now. And, to turn once more to such experience as we have, no evidence has been produced from any country that has adopted proportional representation to show that election expenses as a whole have increased. Indeed, in the municipal contests at Johannesburg the Labour party's experience was that the cost of election was as low as £17, 7s. 10d. per candidate, and this in the "Golden City," where the value of money is far less than in England.

The objections commonly urged have now been considered. Some are largely conjectural, and must be answered to some extent from conjecture. Others, such as the allegation that this system will increase the power of the "machine," are demonstrably untrue. To some cautious minds, no doubt, the risk may appear too great; to them any change is worse than the evils that they know. To some fierce spirits, who profit by the actual system to impose their yokes on their followers, the prospect of changed conditions means nothing but a loss of power. To others, again, whose better hope is inspired by faith in the growing competence of a more political electorate, the danger seems trivial, and the hesitation cowardly before the promise of a parliament with which the people of this country will be in vital connection and which will recognise and express at once the will of the majority and the light and vigour of the few.

THE MOVEMENT OUTSIDE THE UNITED KINGDOM

"FIRE," said a philosopher, "burns also among the Persians"; if it did not, we may add, it would not be fire. The reality of representation is not called for in this country only; if it were, we might conjecture that there was something artificial in the call.

Proportional Representation a Universal Movement.

The best answer to those who consciously or unconsciously affirm that the demand for a better system of representation, a more thorough co-operation of the nation in politics, is a mere whim of discontented "intellectuals," is the fact that in all countries with experience of parliamentary government the dissatisfaction with the majority system of election is growing, and the proportional system is steadily making way. To examine the different systems of proportional election adopted or proposed for adoption, whether in Europe or elsewhere, is no part of the scheme of this pamphlet, nor would it be useful to attempt to give any history of the growth and success of the foreign movements,[1] some of which (reported very scantily, if at all, in our British newspapers) are developing and changing every day. But, in order that readers may have no doubt that they are in the presence of a world-wide movement, it will be of interest to record in outline the not inconsiderable progress already made.

[1] Enquirers may be referred for the Belgian movement to Count Goblet d'Alviella's *la Représentation Proportionnelle en Belgique*, Brussels, Weissenbruch, 1900; *La Représentation Proportionnelle en Belgique*, by Paul Cameau, Paris, Rousseau, 1901; and *La Représentation Proportionnelle en France et en Belgique*, by Georges La Chapelle (Preface de H. Poincaré), Paris, Alcan, 1911; and for the Swiss movement to *Die Proportionalwahl in der Schweiz*, by Dr Emil Kloti, 1901.

On the continent of Europe a proportional system was in use as early as 1855 in Denmark in the election of the Upper House; but the cradle of the modern proportionalist movement was in Switzerland, in the canton of Ticino. It was there introduced in 1891 on the suggestion of the federal government in order to appease a situation in which acute electoral injustice has brought an intensely political and vivacious community over the brink of civil war. In the democratic air of self-governing Switzerland the plant throve and grew. Its progress may be described in the words used by Dr Horace Micheli, of the *Journal de Genéve*, at the International Dinner of Proportionalists held in London on 3rd December 1913 :—

Switzerland.

"Nine of our twenty-two cantons to-day employ proportional representation for the election of their cantonal councils. It is about to be introduced, or is, at least, under discussion in three others, including Zurich. Further, it is applied by several towns at their municipal elections. The most important towns in Switzerland, Zurich, Basel, Geneva, Berne, Neuchâtel, and Fribourg, and many others of less importance, employ it in the election of their town councils. Everywhere, I can affirm, it has given entirely satisfactory results, and the number of persons who vote has been greatly increased. We have always found that proportional representation increases the percentage of electors who take part in an election.

"It was only to be expected that the Swiss proportionalists would try to extend their principles to the Confederation, and apply it to the election of the National Council. The Swiss constitution gives to 50,000 citizens the right—called the right of Initiative—to propose directly to the people any constitutional amendment to which parliament refuses to agree, as it has refused proportional representation. If this amendment is accepted by the majority of electors and cantons, it becomes a part—having the same standing as the other articles—of our constitution, and our government must submit to it. The Swiss proportionalists have made use of this right. Twice already they have put this idea directly before the people, and it will shortly be submitted to them again. In 1900 it was rejected by a majority of

75,000. In 1910 it was rejected again, but with a majority of 25,000 only out of 500,000 votes. Twelve cantons accepted it against ten only who refused it. All the cantons who possess proportional representation for their cantonal elections, all the towns who practise it for their municipal elections, showed a large popular majority in favour of its extension to federal elections. This proves that those who practise electoral justice are completely satisfied with it, and those who are still against it are those who do not or will not know it. For this reason we did not let ourselves be discouraged by the vote of 1910. After three years' interval we have this year (1913) issued a new initiative petition, which in a few weeks gained 122,000 signatures. We have a sure hope that we shall succeed this time."

Belgium.

From Switzerland proportional representation passed in 1900 to Belgium, a country where perhaps political feeling runs as deep and as swift as in any country in the world. The Belgians devised their own system —called the d'Hondt system after the distinguished professor of Ghent who invented it—and now (1914), in the words used at the same international gathering by M. Georges Lorand, the Radical leader :—

"We have used it for thirteen years, and we have had six general elections with the new system, and the result is that not a single party nor a fraction of a party is opposed to the reform ; its extension is inscribed in the programme of all parties. The opposition parties, Liberal and Socialist, demand that it should be extended to the county councils, and should be applied completely to municipal elections. It is certain that the system of proportional representation in Belgium will never be changed, save for the purpose of rendering it more complete, more just, and more proportional."

We hear sometimes of the rivalry of the ports of Antwerp, Liverpool, London, and Hamburg. Let us turn our eyes for a moment away from statistics of their tonnage, and look at their civic and political life. How are these great ports represented in their national assemblies? Hamburg, the Hansa town, the typical city of the German middle-class merchant and trader, sends to the Reichstag only Social Democrats. In London a majority of those who voted at the

last election favoured one party, and a majority of representatives was returned by the other.[1] In Liverpool not a single Liberal is returned; though there is a strong Liberal minority with a fine tradition of social service in the city, eight Unionists and one Irishman are sent by Liverpool to the House of Commons. Antwerp alone, with her varied representation of eight Catholics, five Liberals, and two Socialists, sends the strongest of her citizens of each political belief in their fair proportions to the national parliament, and teaches her rivals the lesson of a justly organised democracy.

Sweden.

In Sweden proportional representation was introduced in 1909 with a system of considerable originality, which has worked with ease and success. It is sufficient to quote the declaration of the deputy speaker of the Lower Chamber of the Riksdag, Daniel Persson I. Tallberg, who tells us: [2]—

"In all essentials the expectations entertained respecting proportional representation by its advocates have been fulfilled, while the apprehensions of its opponents have not been confirmed. The new mode of procedure to be followed when registering their votes has *not* proved to be beyond the comprehensions of the voters, nor has it aroused suspicion in their minds; on the contrary, the voters have learnt how to fall in with the new regulations with surprising ease and facility; it has *not* put a premium on men of only average intelligence and ability, but has distinctly raised the intellectual level of the representatives returned. . . . The change from representation by majority vote to proportional representation marks, in my judgment, a great step forward in Swedish political life." And on the same occasion equally emphatic testimony was given by other distinguished Swedish statesmen, particularly interesting perhaps being the remarks of the Social Democratic leader, Herr Hjalmar Branting, that, "whenever a party has to fight its way to the front among others of older standing that are powerful and well organised, it can only come by its due by the aid of the proportional method of voting."

[1] See figures on page 23.

[2] In a message read at the International Proportional Representation Dinner, December 1913.

The introduction of proportional representation to Sweden was the result of a movement dating back as far as 1867; this movement had influence in Finland, where a highly elaborate system was established in 1906 shortly after the partial restoration of Finnish freedom. The system has worked without hitch on a basis of universal suffrage for men and women, and seems likely to continue as long as Finnish liberties last. In Denmark a full application of the proportional system is now under discussion, a special parliamentary committee having been appointed, charged with an enquiry into the different systems of proportional representation with a view to recommending one of these for adoption. The position in Holland is the same. All political parties have admitted the principle, and the government has appointed a commission to determine which is the best form for Holland.

Finland.

Denmark.

Holland.

Within the British Empire we have two examples of a proportional system already at work: one in the little community of Tasmania and one in the South African dominion. In Tasmania the system of the single transferable vote was introduced in 1896 for two urban districts, Hobart and Launceston, only; this partial application was found to be unfair, and in 1901 the old system was restored. But in 1907 the proportional system was reintroduced and applied this time to the whole country, which was divided into five constituencies returning each six members. Three general elections[1] have now been held and, though there is some local opinion which inclines to favour a list system in preference to the single transferable vote, the proportional principle is so firmly established that a return to the ordinary majority methods is highly improbable. The example of Tasmania is not without effect in the other Australian colonies.

Tasmania.

In South Africa proportional representation is established by the South Africa Act, 1909, for the election both of the Senate of the Union and of the Executive Committees of the Provincial Councils. The senatorial elections are interesting as illustrative of the

South Africa.

[1] The figures are given on page 42.

employment of the system in a case where the number of electors is very much smaller in proportion to the number of persons to be elected than is the case in a parliamentary election. In the election of the first Senate of the Union the electors were the members of both Houses of Parliament electing eight senators in each of the four colonies; in the case of the Transvaal there were eighty-four voters; in the case of the Cape one hundred and thirty-four voters; in the case of the Orange River Colony forty-nine voters, and in the case of Natal fifty-six voters. In subsequent elections eight senators for each province will be elected by the members of the Provincial Council of such province together with the members of the Union House of Assembly representing the province. The system of the single transferable vote is readily adaptable to these conditions, though certain technical modifications are necessary, the value of one vote being raised to 100 for purposes of counting. Proportional representation in South Africa was also applied in 1909 to the municipal elections of Pretoria and Johannesburg: two elections were held, in 1909 and 1911, both with complete success. Unfortunately, when in 1912 the Union government revised its municipal legislation, it made no provision for keeping alive the proportional system in Johannesburg and Pretoria. It should be observed that this action was not taken by, or at the instance of, the communities directly concerned, and in fact the new Act was carried through against the protests of the Johannesburg press.[1] This relapse forms no exception to the general rule that no community which has once adopted proportional representation has ever permanently abandoned it.

Small Countries.

It has been objected that all these examples are taken from small countries without a foreign policy. The full force of that objection will be best appreciated by those who understand how far foreign policy is under the control of the British House of Commons. It would be unwise to refuse to follow the teaching of experience merely because the trial has been made in a small country. When a universal constitutional

[1] The recent Labour victories on the Rand may lead to a restoration of proportional representation (see an interview with one of the Rand Labour leaders reported in the *Daily Chronicle* of 20th March 1914).

history is written it may well be found that communities have contributed to political science almost in inverse proportion to their size. The example and experience of other countries is, however, not quoted here as having a direct and immediate validity for British conditions; caution must be exercised in arguing from the institutions of one country to those of another, though perhaps the least important element in forming a conclusion is the question of the relative size of the countries compared. But the cumulative effect of repeated successes is great, and the fact that not a single community that has adopted proportional representation has of its own will permanently gone back to a majority system, is evidence which can hardly be disregarded. It does not lie in the mouth of Englishmen whose legitimate pride it is that their parliamentary institutions have been copied, with more or less modification, throughout the civilised world, to argue that no inference can be drawn from the actual behaviour of men under a given form of political arrangement in one country to their probable behaviour under the same or a similar form in another. The small countries in modern Europe are more full of instruction for the student of politics, national and international, than the Great Powers, one reason being that in a small country the influence of a small group of men is proportionately larger. A small minority of advocates of real representation can do more in a population of three, four, or even seven millions than in a large and unified political mass of forty or fifty million minds.

But neither France nor Germany have been unmoved by the example of their smaller neighbours. In France the government bill embodying the proportional principle was carried by crushing majorities in the Chamber, but like some other reforms it has not succeeded in passing the Senate. Its warmest supporters are to be found among the Socialists on the one hand, and on the Left Centre and Right on the other, but it also has a considerable body of support among the Radicals and Radical Socialists, of whom the "Bloc" that so long governed France was mainly composed. The French intellect has realised that to introduce a proportional system means in

France.

France to put politics on a higher plane; to direct political discussion more to matters of principle and less to conflicts of personalities; to enable parties to get representation in districts where they are in a minority is to make all parties national, and with a wider geographical range the tendency is for a party to rely more upon principles and less upon purely local appeals. M. Jaurès has put the proportional case into eloquent language: "Celui-ci tuera celui-là. Voilà la formule du scrutin d'arrondissement. Ceux-ci tueront ceux-là. Voilà la formule du scrutin de liste sans la représentation proportionnelle. Ceux-ci et ceux-là auront leur juste part. Voilà la formule du scrutin de liste avec la représentation proportionnelle."

It is not for an Englishman to attempt to give an account of the French political situation, but he may perhaps be allowed two remarks.

First, the whole question of systems of representation has, both since the foundation of the Third Republic and earlier, been discussed far more thoroughly in France than with us; Frenchmen still have in their ears Mirabeau's phrase—"les États sont pour la nation ce qu'est une carte réduite pour son étendue physique; soit en partie, soit en grand, la copie doit toujours avoir les mêmes proportions que l'original"; and Gambetta's policy of the *scrutin de liste* has left behind it memories. The Boulanger elections for Paris and other departments showed to Frenchmen how important electoral machinery may be; what had been intended as a defence of democracy became the weapon of a Pretender. In France the idea that electoral justice can be attained by a method of equally divided single-member constituencies would be met with a smile.

Second, the main cause why resistance is still offered in France is, that politicians of the old Radical school, such as M. Clémenceau, are still convinced that to allow the fair representation of parties other than their own is to introduce the enemy within the gates. Reactionary parties in their view are still at war with the Republic, and their spokesmen should be repressed as far as possible. The justice of this view it is for Frenchmen to estimate, but its prevalence gives an intelligible reason for a resistance to a policy which

assumes the loyalty of electors and elected to the parliamentary institutions of which they form part.

Germany.

In Germany the prospect of the introduction of a proportional system for the Reichstag or the Prussian parliament is far less promising, though the need for a better system is felt keenly enough, and the last (1912) elections for the Reichstag gave results that are indefensible.

Parties.	Votes.	Seats obtained.	Seats in Proportion to Votes.
Social Democrats	4,250,329	110	138
Centre Party	2,035,290	93	66
National Liberals	1,701,767	45	56
Conservatives	1,855,946	72	61
Radical Parties	1,606,549	45	52
Nationalist Parties and Independents	747,072	32	24
Total . .	12,196,953	397	397

In April 1913, a resolution asking for the introduction of a Proportional Representation Bill was introduced into the Reichstag by the Social Democrats, and only defeated by a single vote (140 to 139). But Germany has not a parliamentary government; the Prussian electoral arrangements are the keystone of the present system; no German government is likely, under existing circumstances, to take a step that would precipitate an advance to democracy. The German opposition is not based on dislike of proportional representation as such, but on the knowledge that under proportional representation the present régime would be impossible. At the same time proportional representation is well known in Germany; it is in force in the elections to the parliaments of the Free City of Hamburg and of the Kingdom of Würtemberg; its extension for parliamentary purposes to the Grand-Duchy of Baden is almost certain; it is very largely employed in municipal areas in South Germany and in Oldenburg, and it is well known in the election of insurance committees and in certain workmen's organisations.

It is worth while to notice that in all the European countries that have been mentioned, and especially in Germany and France, the Socialists have been among the supporters of the reform; in Italy the only party which has hitherto declared in its favour as a party is the Socialist party; the same thing is true of the United States, where the Socialists (who polled nearly 1,000,000 votes at the Federal Elections of 1913) have made the reform a plank in their platform,[1] and support has been found mainly in the younger communities of the West. It would be short-sighted to dismiss this support as the merely adolescent enthusiasm of a party on whom existing conditions press hard. A wise man will welcome the desire of the enemies of the existing economic order to introduce into it a more just representation for all men, and will see in this attitude the promise that society may after all develop by orderly evolution and not by a series of revolutionary catastrophes. But if such an orderly evolution is to be possible, society on its political side—in other words, our representative assemblies both parliamentary and municipal—must embrace all citizens. We must have parliaments based rather on the models of those historic gatherings which founded the governments of the United States and of the larger units of the British Imperial Dominions, than on the Rumps and Conventions which have purchased the temporary triumphs of a parliamentary party at the price of the reintroduction of autocratic rule.

Socialists.

[1] Mr Clarence G. Hoag of the American Proportional Representation League reports (December 1913) that, "some of the leading Progressives are becoming interested."

APPENDIX

A SCHEME OF REDISTRIBUTION FOR GREAT BRITAIN.[1]

THE following tentative scheme for the redistribution of Great Britain has been prepared by the Proportional Representation Society, and is annexed to the Proportional Representation Bill, introduced into the House of Commons in 1912 by Mr R. D. Holt, supported by Sir W. P. Beale, the Right Hon. Thomas Burt, Lord Hugh Cecil, Mr Cecil Harmsworth, Mr J. R. P. Newman, Mr G. H. Roberts, Mr Leslie Scott, and the Right Hon. F. E. Smith, and in 1913 by Mr Amery, supported by Lord Robert Cecil, Mr Chiozza-Money, Mr Cecil Harmsworth, and Mr Philip Snowden. The scheme serves to suggest the *kind* of electoral regrouping that would be necessary if proportional representation on the system of the single transferable vote were introduced.

The population figures are taken from the 1911 census, but in certain cases, when a borough has extended its boundaries since 1911, these figures are necessarily only approximate. The constituencies are formed from the natural divisions of the country. The large towns, such as Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, and Bristol, are treated as single constituencies. London and Glasgow are subdivided, London into ten constituencies (in the framing of which regard has been had to the old parliamentary divisions into which the metropolis was formerly divided), Glasgow into two, one north and the other south of the Clyde. Where the towns are not large enough to be entitled to as many as five members, they have been absorbed into the surrounding county or county division.

[1] The Irish Proportional Representation Society has prepared a scheme for redistribution in Ireland which may be obtained on application to the secretary of the Irish Proportional Representation Society, 33 Molesworth Street, Dublin.

Similarly, counties are treated as single electoral areas. Berks, Cornwall, Leicester, Somerset, and other counties of similar size, each become constituencies in themselves. The larger counties have been subdivided. The county of York, exclusive of Leeds and Sheffield, is divided into nine parliamentary constituencies. Durham is divided into three. Some of the smaller counties are linked up with their neighbours—Westmorland with Cumberland, Huntingdon with Cambridge.

The seats have been allotted to the different constituencies on a population basis. The population in 1911 of England and Wales was 36,075,269, and the number of members of the House of Commons, exclusive of university members, is 490. The quota of population per member is accordingly 73,623. One member has been allotted to each constituency for every quota of population contained therein. Thus, Buckinghamshire contains a population of 219,583, or three times the quota, and three members are accordingly allotted to it. If the population of a constituency exceeds three, but is less than three and a half quotas, the number of seats given has been three. If the population exceeds three and a half, but is less than four quotas, four seats have been given. In the Scottish constituencies, however, some allowance has been made in favour of the sparsely populated areas in the Highland counties. The City and Westminster division of London has been given five seats by reason of the large day population.

As a rule, no constituency has been formed with less than three members. There are one or two exceptions. The counties of Orkney and Shetland have been retained as a single-member constituency, whilst the Isle of Wight has been treated in a similar way. There are two double-member constituencies. Argyll and Bute form one, and the Scottish universities another. These are the only exceptions, and the other constituencies vary from three to eleven. Birmingham, with eleven members, has the distinction of being the largest constituency, Liverpool is next with ten, Manchester and the Wolverhampton division of Staffordshire follow with nine. In all, 110 constituencies have been formed, returning 567 members, the average per constituency being just under 5.2 members.

A glance at the schedule of the bill will show how a proportional system simplifies the problem of redistribution. It is often forgotten what drastic alterations a scheme of equal single-member constituencies will involve. In London it would mean the rearrangement of all the existing constituencies. Fresh areas would have to

be created, the boundaries of which would cut across the boundaries of the administrative boroughs. And the scheme will be in constant need of revision in the future. The proportional scheme respects all administrative boundaries, and makes all future redistributions easy, as, in all but exceptional cases, all that will be wanted is to alter the number of members allotted to a constituency, not to rearrange its boundaries.

Further, the proportional scheme avoids all gerrymandering. For instance, it gives five seats to Cornwall instead of seven, the number which Cornwall at present returns. By treating Cornwall as one constituency, and making use of the transferable vote, it allows Unionists and Liberals each to obtain their share of representation. Under the scheme of equal single-member constituencies advocated by Major Morrison-Bell, Cornwall would similarly obtain five members, but the character of the representation would depend on the way in which the new constituencies were arranged. Cornwall now returns two Unionists and five Liberals. The combined boroughs of Penryn and Falmouth and the Bodmin division are held by the Unionists with majorities of 274 and 41 respectively. But the St Austell and Camborne divisions are held by the Liberals with majorities of 3087 and 2093. It would be a very simple task to rearrange the five new single-member constituencies in such a way that there would be a Liberal majority in each. The Unionists would then be unrepresented.

REDISTRIBUTION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Population (1911)	36,075,269
Number of members (exclusive of university members)	490
Population (per member)	73,623
Number of university members	5

Constituency[1] and Population.	Extent of Constituency.	No. of Members.
BEDFORD (194,625)	The county of Bedford (including the borough of Bedford)	3
BERKS (271,028)	The county of Berkshire (including Reading and New Windsor)	4
BUCKS (219,583)	The county of Buckingham	3
CAMBRIDGE AND HUNTS (253,667)	The counties of Cambridge (including the borough of Cambridge) and Huntingdon	3
CHESHIRE (954,919)		
West Division (*380,950*)	Chester and Birkenhead, and the Wirral and Eddisbury divisions[2]	5
East Division (*573,346*)	Altrincham, Knutsford, Northwich, Macclesfield, and Crewe divisions (For Stockport, Stalybridge, and the Hyde division (population 192,093), *see* Lancashire and Cheshire)	5
CORNWALL (328,131)	The county of Cornwall (including Penryn and Falmouth)	5
CUMBERLAND AND WESTMORLAND (329,355)	The counties of Cumberland (including Carlisle and Whitehaven) and Westmorland	5
DERBY (683,562)		
North Division (*335,738*)	High Peak, North-East, Chesterfield, and West divisions	4
South Division (*375,776*)	Remainder of county of Derby (including the borough of Derby)	5
DEVON (699,739)		
Plymouth or South Division (*316,770*)	Plymouth and Devonport, and the Totnes and Torquay divisions	4
Exeter or North Division (*381,970*)	Remainder of county of Devon (including Exeter)	5

[1] When the county is divided into two or more constituencies the names and populations of the component constituencies are printed in italics.

The totals of the population of component constituencies do not always exactly coincide with the figures given for the population of whole counties. These small discrepancies are caused by the fact that the county figures relate to administrative counties, while the figures for the component constituencies relate in some cases to the existing parliamentary divisions, the boundaries of which do not exactly coincide with administrative boundaries.

[2] "Divisions" means "existing parliamentary divisions."

Constituency and Population.	Extent of Constituency.	No. of Members.
DORSET (223,274)	The county of Dorset	3
DURHAM (1,370,011)		
North-East, or Tyne and Wear Division (*585,659*)	Gateshead, South Shields, and Sunderland, and the Jarrow and Houghton-le-Spring divisions	8
South-East or Tees Division (*394,899*)	Hartlepool, Stockton, and Darlington, and the South-East and Bishop Auckland divisions	5
West Division (*407,626*)	Remainder of county of Durham (including the city of Durham)	6
ESSEX (1,351,102)		
Ham Division (*422,606*)	The county borough of West Ham and the urban district of East Ham	6
South Division (*426,167*)	Walthamstow and Romford divisions, except East Ham	6
North Division (*504,076*)	Remainder of county of Essex (including Colchester)	7
GLOUCESTER (736,125)		
County (*379,066*)	The county of Gloucester (including the city of Gloucester and Cheltenham, but excluding Bristol)	5
Bristol (*357,059*)	The city of Bristol	5
HANTS (950,678)		
Portsmouth & Southampton Division (*468,642*)	Portsmouth and Southampton, and the Fareham division	7
North and West Division (*392,463*)	Remainder of county of Hants (including Christchurch and Winchester, but excluding the Isle of Wight)	5
The Isle of Wight (*88,193*)	The Isle of Wight	1
HEREFORD	(*See* Shropshire)	
HERTFORD (311,321)	The county of Hertford	4
HUNTINGDON	(*See* Cambridge)	
KENT (1,045,661)		
East or Canterbury Division (*357,852*)	Canterbury, Dover, and Hythe, and the Isle of Thanet, St Augustine's, and Faversham divisions	5
South Division (*268,470*)	Sevenoaks, Tunbridge, and Ashford divisions	4
North Division (*394,267*)	Remainder of county of Kent (including Chatham, Gravesend, Maidstone, and Rochester)	5
LANCS (4,768,474)		
North or Lancaster Division (*191,868*)	Barrow-in-Furness and the North Lonsdale and Lancaster divisions	3
Preston Division (*446,010*)	Preston and the Blackpool, Chorley, and Darwen divisions	6
Burnley and Blackburn Division (*524,632*)	Burnley and Blackburn, and the Accrington, Rossendale, and Clitheroe divisions	7

Constituency and Population.	Extent of Constituency.	No. of Members.
LANCS—*continued.*		
Southport Division (*312,722*)	Southport, Bootle, Ormskirk, and Widnes divisions, excluding such parts of the Bootle division as lie within the city of Liverpool	4
South or Wigan Division (*495,306*)	Wigan, St Helens, and Warrington, and the Newton, Ince, and Leigh divisions	7
Bolton Division (*442,322*)	Bolton and Bury, and the Westhoughton, Heywood, and Radcliffe-cum-Farnworth divisions	6
Oldham Division (*373,670*)	Oldham and Rochdale, and the Middleton division	5
Salford Division (*401,176*)	Salford, the Eccles division, and such parts of the Stretford and Prestwich divisions as lie to the west or north-west of the city of Manchester	5
Liverpool (*746,566*)	The city of Liverpool	10
Manchester (*714,427*)	The city of Manchester	9
LANCS AND CHESHIRE		
Stockport Division (*351,825*)	Stockport, Stalybridge, and Ashton-under-Lyne, the Hyde division of Cheshire, and such parts of the Stretford, Gorton, and Prestwich divisions of Lancashire as do not lie within the city of Manchester or in the Salford division of Lancashire	5
LEICESTER AND RUTLAND (496,950)	The counties of Leicester (including the borough of Leicester) and Rutland	7
LINCOLN (564,013)		
Lindsey (*369,821*)	The county of Lindsey (including the city of Lincoln and Great Grimsby)	5
Kesteven and Holland (*194,192*)	The counties of Kesteven and Holland (including Boston and Grantham)	3
LONDON (4,522,961)		
City and Westminster (*179,934*)	The city of London and the city of Westminster	5
Marylebone (*564,760*)	The metropolitan boroughs of Marylebone, Hampstead, Paddington, and St Pancras	7
Chelsea (*513,734*)	The metropolitan boroughs of Chelsea, Fulham, Hammersmith, and Kensington	7
Wandsworth (*311,402*)	The metropolitan borough of Wandsworth	4
Lambeth (*465,919*)	The metropolitan boroughs of Battersea and Lambeth	6
Southwark (*579,268*)	The metropolitan boroughs of Camberwell, Bermondsey, and Southwark	7
Greenwich (*487,721*)	The metropolitan boroughs of Deptford, Lewisham, Greenwich, and Woolwich	6
Tower Hamlets (*442,473*)	The metropolitan boroughs of Poplar and Stepney	6
Hackney (*462,332*)	The metropolitan boroughs of Hackney, Shoreditch, and Bethnal Green	6
Finsbury (*495,418*)	The metropolitan boroughs of Finsbury, Holborn, Islington, and Stoke Newington	6

Constituency and Population.	Extent of Constituency.	No. of Members.
MIDDLESEX (1,126,694)		
East Division (*505,727*)	Enfield, Tottenham, and Hornsey divisions	7
West Division (*643,331*)	Remainder of county of Middlesex	8
MONMOUTH (395,778)	The county of Monmouth (including the Monmouth district of boroughs)	5
NORFOLK (499,049)	The county of Norfolk (including Norwich, Great Yarmouth, and King's Lynn)	7
NORTHAMPTON (348,552)	The county of Northampton (including the boroughs of Northampton and Peterborough)	5
NORTHUMBERLAND (697,016)		
Newcastle and Tyneside Division (*416,694*)	Newcastle-on-Tyne and Tynemouth, and the Tyneside division	5
North Division (*278,003*)	Remainder of county of Northumberland (including Morpeth)	4
NOTTINGHAM (604,077)	The county of Nottingham (including the city of Nottingham)	8
OXFORD (199,277)	The county of Oxford (including the city of Oxford)	3
RUTLAND	(*See* Leicester)	
SHROPSHIRE AND HEREFORD (360,575)	The counties of Shropshire (including Shrewsbury) and Hereford (including the city of Hereford)	5
SOMERSET (458,074)	The county of Somerset (including Bath and Taunton)	6
STAFFORD (1,330,904)		
Wolverhampton Division (*689,743*)	Wolverhampton, West Bromwich, Walsall, Dudley, and Wednesbury, and such parts of the Kingswinford and Handsworth divisions as do not lie within the city of Birmingham	9
Stoke-on-Trent Division (*338,589*)	Stoke-on-Trent, Hanley, Newcastle-under-Lyme, the urban districts of Wolstanton United, Audley, Biddulph, and Leek, and the rural districts of Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme, and Leek	5
Burton Division (*291,375*)	Remainder of county of Stafford (including the borough of Stafford)	4
SUFFOLK (394,080)	The county of Suffolk (including Ipswich and Bury St Edmonds)	5
SURREY (845,544)		
Croydon Division (*456,559*)	Croydon and the Wimbledon and Kingston divisions	6
Guildford Division (*388,394*)	Remainder of county of Surrey	5

Constituency and Population.	Extent of Constituency.	No. of Members.
SUSSEX (663,416)		
Brighton or West Division (*352,278*)	Brighton and the Chichester and Horsham divisions and such parts of the Lewes division as lie to the north and west of Brighton	5
Hastings or East Division (*310,778*)	Remainder of county of Sussex (including Hastings and Eastbourne)	4
WARWICK (1,247,637)		
County (*407,308*)	The county of Warwick (including the boroughs of Warwick and Coventry, but excluding Birmingham)	6
Birmingham (*840,329*)	The city of Birmingham (including Aston Manor)	11
WESTMORLAND	(*See* Cumberland)	
WILTS (286,876)	The county of Wiltshire (including Salisbury)	4
WORCESTER (336,652)	The county of Worcester (including the boroughs of Worcester and Kidderminster, but excluding Dudley, for which *see* Stafford)	5
YORKS (3,980,491)		
North Riding (*374,786*)	The North Riding of Yorkshire (including Middlesbrough and Scarborough, but excluding the Thirsk and Malton division)	5
East Riding (*432,804*)	The East Riding of Yorkshire (including Hull)	6
York Division (*335,900*)	York and Pontefract, and the Thirsk and Malton, Barkston Ash and Osgoldcross divisions	5
Ripon Division (*218,642*)	Ripon, Skipton, and Otley divisions	3
Bradford Division (*422,860*)	Bradford and the Keighley, Pudsey, and Shipley divisions	6
Halifax and Huddersfield Division (*388,145*)	Halifax and Huddersfield, and the Elland, Sowerby, and Colne Valley divisions	5
Wakefield Division (*419,939*)	Wakefield and Dewsbury, and the Normanton, Morley, Spen Valley, and Holmfirth divisions	6
Rotherham Division (*508,647*)	Rotherham, Barnsley, Doncaster, and Hallamshire divisions	6
Leeds (*445,586*)	The city of Leeds	6
Sheffield (*453,653*)	The city of Sheffield	6

WALES

ANGLESEY, CARNARVON, AND MERIONETH (221,565)	The counties of Anglesey, Carnarvon, and Merioneth (including Carnarvon boroughs)	3
DENBIGH AND FLINT (237,516)	The counties of Denbigh (including Denbigh boroughs) and Flint (including Flint boroughs)	3

Constituency and Population.	Extent of Constituency.	No. of Members.
CARDIGAN, MONTGOMERY, RADNOR, AND BRECKNOCK (194,911)	The counties of Cardigan, Montgomery, Radnor, and Brecknock (including Montgomery boroughs)	3
CARMARTHEN AND PEMBROKE (250,386)	The counties of Carmarthen (including Carmarthen boroughs) and Pembroke (including Pembroke boroughs)	4
GLAMORGAN (1,121,062)		
Cardiff Division (*319,384*)	Cardiff boroughs and the Southern division	5
Merthyr Division (*429,486*)	Merthyr Tydfil and the Eastern and Rhondda divisions	6
Swansea Division (*371,554*)	Remainder of county of Glamorgan and Swansea	5

REDISTRIBUTION FOR SCOTLAND

Population (1911)	4,759,445
Number of members (exclusive of university members) . .	70
Population (per member)	67,992
Number of university members	2

ABERDEEN, KINCARDINE, AND BANFF (413,759)	The counties of Aberdeen (including the burgh of Aberdeen), Banff, and Kincardine	6
ARGYLL AND BUTE (89,087)	The counties of Argyll and Bute	2
AYR (268,332)	The county of Ayr (including such of the Ayr and Kilmarnock burghs as lie within the county)	4
CAITHNESS, SUTHERLAND, ROSS, AND CROMARTY (129,541)	The counties of Caithness, Sutherland, and Ross and Cromarty (including the Wick burghs other than Kirkwall)	3
DUMBARTON AND RENFREW (406,000)	The counties of Dumbarton and Renfrew (excluding such parts as lie within Glasgow, and including the burghs of Greenock and Paisley)	6
DUMFRIES, KIRKCUDBRIGHT, AND WIGTOWN (143,177)	The counties of Dumfries, Kirkcudbright, and Wigtown (including the Dumfries burghs)	3
EDINBURGH AND LEITH (401,368)	The burghs of Edinburgh and Leith	5

Constituency and Population.	Extent of Constituency.	No. of Members.
FIFE (267,734)	The county of Fife (including the St Andrews and Kirkcaldy burghs)	4
GLASGOW [1]—		
North Division (*691,000*)	Such parts of Glasgow as lie north of the river Clyde	9
South Division (*338,000*)	Such parts of Glasgow as lie south of the river Clyde	4
HADDINGTON, EDINBURGH CO., PEEBLES, SELKIRK, ROXBURGH, AND BERWICK (266,240)	The counties of Haddington, Edinburgh, Peebles, Selkirk, Roxburgh, and Berwick (excluding the burghs of Edinburgh and Leith)	4
INVERNESS, ELGIN, AND NAIRN (140,016)	The counties of Inverness, Elgin, and Nairn (including such of the Inverness and Elgin burghs as lie within these counties)	3
LANARK (465,000)	The county of Lanark (excluding such parts as lie within Glasgow)	6
ORKNEY AND SHETLAND (53,807)	The counties of Orkney and Shetland	1
PERTH AND FORFAR (405,758)	The counties of Perth (including the city of Perth) and Forfar (including Dundee, and the Montrose burghs other than Inverbervie)	6
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[1] Including the suburban areas added to the city of Glasgow by the Glasgow Boundaries Act, 1912.

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Constituencies.	No. of Members.
The Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and London . .	5
The Universities of Edinburgh, St Andrews, Glasgow, and Aberdeen .	2

Note.—It may be necessary to add that the Proportional Representation Society take no side on the political questions connected with the basis of representation—*e.g.*, female suffrage or university representation.

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